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ART AND NATURE IN ITALY.



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ART AND NATURE

IN

ITALY.

BY

EUGENE BENSON.



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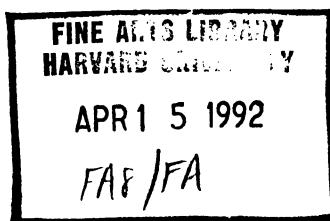
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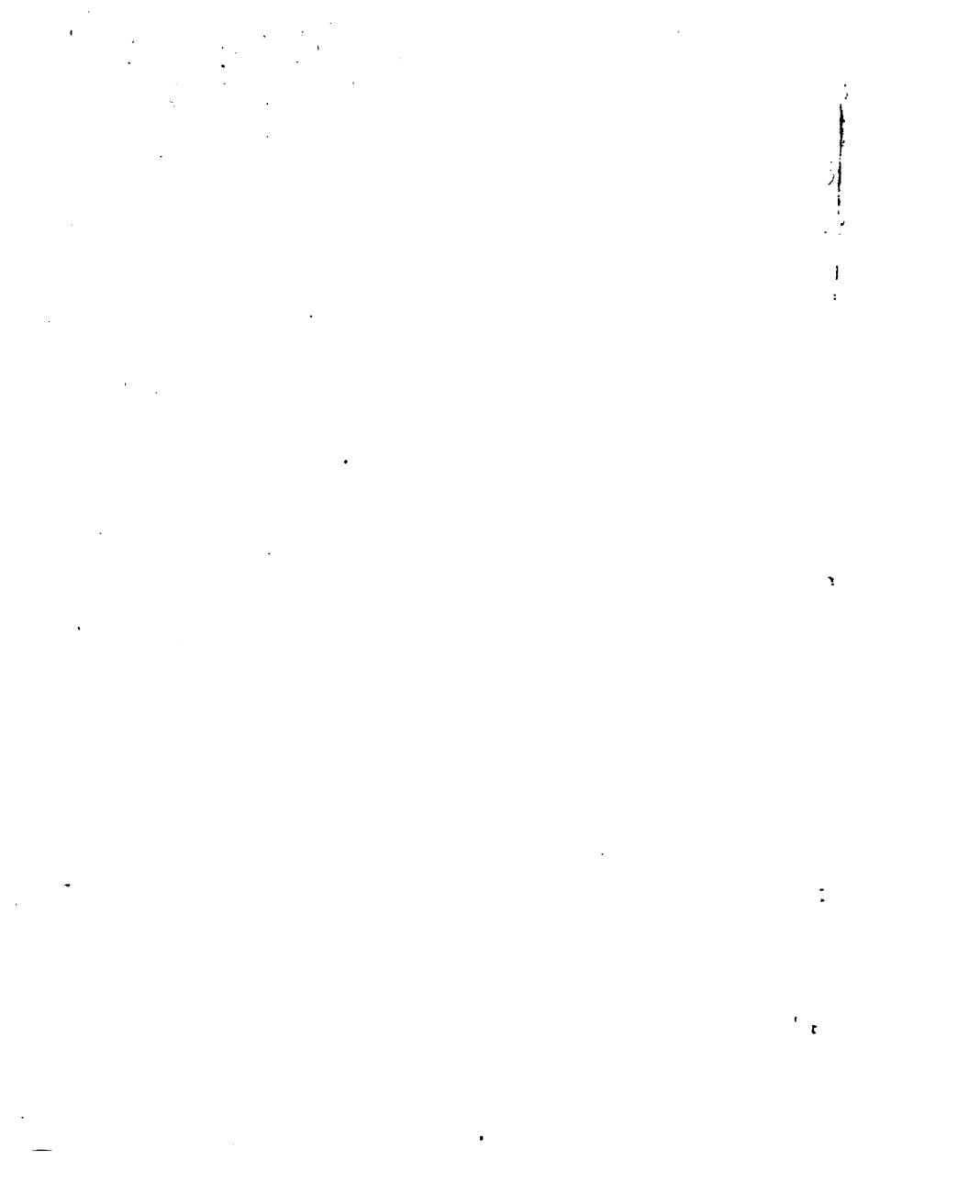
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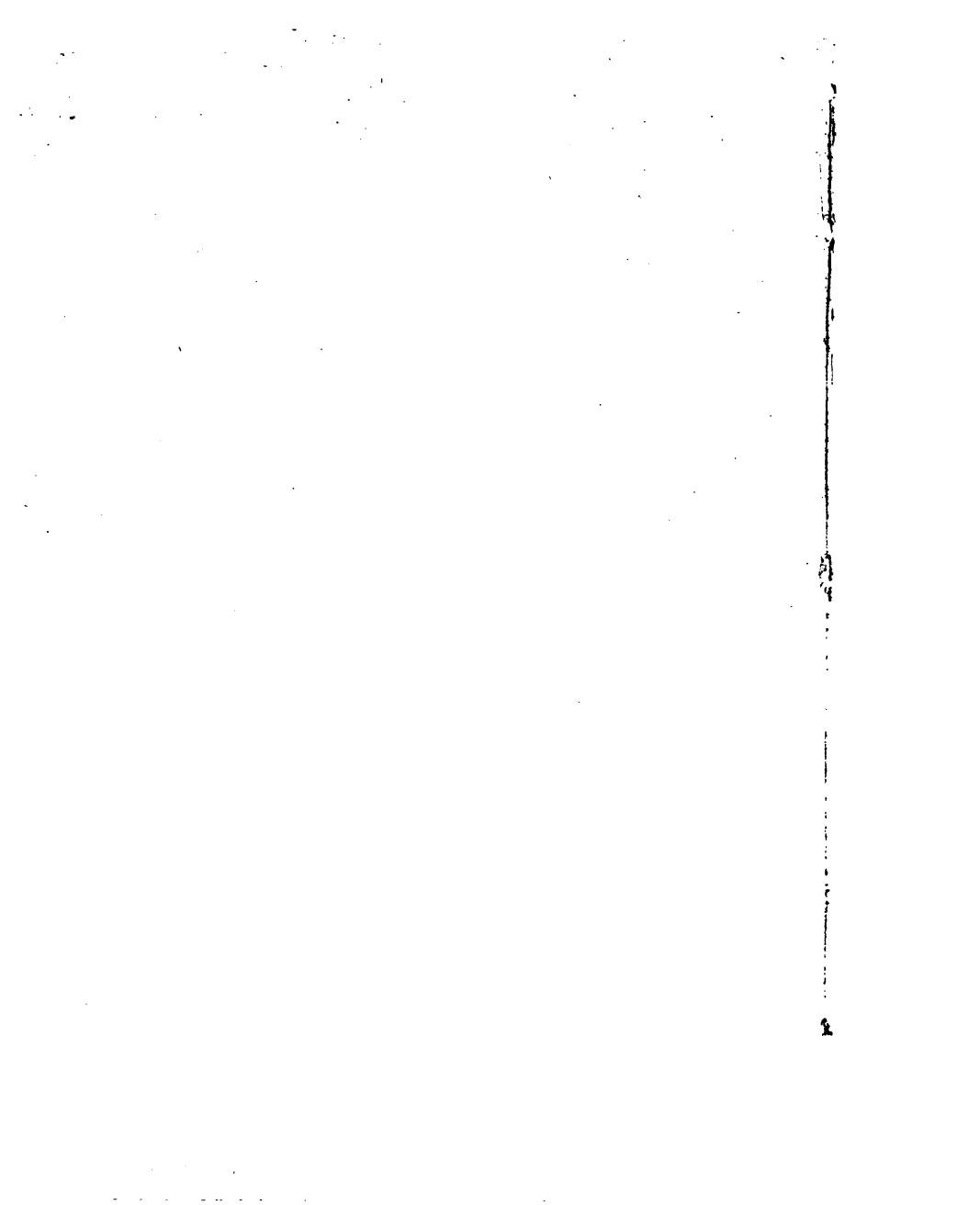
IN MEMORY OF OUR ITALIAN DAYS.

ROME, 1882.



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ART AND NATURE IN ITALY.

IN GIORGIONE'S COUNTRY.

PERHAPS no artist could approach Giorgione's birthplace without some quickening of the pulse. Whether one reaches it from Treviso, or from Vicenza, through pleasant ways of country life under the mellowing autumn sun, or comes down to it from the foothills of the Alps, it appears delightfully placed between the mountains and the lagoons, not far from the richly wooded hills of Asolo. Castelfranco is in the vast and gardenlike plain which between the Alps and the Adriatic seems all but infinite, and it is more beautiful, because less monotonous than that of Lombardy; seen from the enchanting hills of Asolo, it is all green and gold and purple and

faintly blue in the distance, stretching to the vision-like Euganean hills, which rise like linked islands of a paler tint in the radiance of the autumn sky. Driving over it, flat and interminable, it seems, indeed, a ripening place of fruits, of corn, and of yellowing leaves which lazily fall in flakes of golden color. One can reach Castelfranco rapidly enough now by railway, but missing somewhat the basking leisure of driving through the country, through long, quiet village streets, past parish church and now neglected shrines, and past noble residences of rich Trevisians and Venetians. Since I first saw Castelfranco, several years ago, the interest of it has been heightened by the statue placed at one of the angles outside of the ruined castle walls and above the moat. No statue could be more charmingly or more picturesquely placed; none could be more expressive, by its situation, of the very genius it was meant to honor.

You recollect that Giorgione's art means the most romantic and delightful things, and that it expresses the most personal, impassioned, and profound sentiment. You know it stands for high-

bred life and the poetic charm of natural things; representing as it does the deep shade of trees, and towers, and fair skies, and lovely women and knights making music and love,— all the stuff of courtly life in the country. You recollect that no painter has occupied himself with more delightful subjects,— subjects in which no base or low thing has place; a world of harmonious life. Expressing or suggesting all this, his art was something unique, like Spenser's poetry, yet not in the least unreal. It was too sensuous to take the shape of pure fantasy. How appropriate that the statue of Giorgione, of whitest marble, should be placed as it is, in front of a ruined tower, surrounded by soundless water, while back of it stretches a lawn of freshest green, and above rises an ivied and broken wall, whose sombre and crumbling masonry, tapestried with clinging vines, gives striking effect to the marble figure. Nothing can touch it, isolated as it is by the castle's moat; and the handsome painter, in the charming costume of his time, stands there, superb in his young manhood, a romantic, a poetical image of genius, a white presence above the life of to-day. The whole

impression which I had of it from the balcony of the inn seemed to me very like one of Giorgione's own subjects, seen as it was in the indescribable perfection of an autumn evening. And later, when the moon rose, and tower and wall smote densely dark against the sky, and the moat gleamed in light with its motionless reflections, and the wide, white street was deserted, its arched arcades empty and still, the whole scene abandoned to the night,—this one statue seemed the very genius of the place, making a unique and delightful impression. See Castelfranco by moonlight in September. See it from the balcony of the inn. See its ruined towers, its ivied walls, its giant sycamores, its pointed houses, the wide curve of its arcaded and arched street encircling the older town and the castle; you can well understand that it had something, it had much, to give to its immortal son.

Ruskin, I recollect, in one of his finest pages, describes the two boyhoods,—that of Turner and that of Giorgione,—and finds the difference of the character and life of the two men in the fact that one grew up in the slums and could gratify his

sense of picturesque form and bright color only about the docks of Bristol, while the great Venetian had the enchanting spaces of this unrivalled region at the foot of the Alps ; healthful, peaceful, pleasant, clean, flourishing, opulent ; the solemn barrier of the Alps back of all the impressions of his boyhood, and the splendor of Venice as the *milieu* of his bright life. It is well to understand these differences of experience. Without appreciating them one cannot be just in judgment, and I am sure this knowledge increases our pleasure in the quality and character of the work which had so diverse origins.

Giorgione came from a country of extraordinary fertility, prosperity, and beauty. No rough or wild element is native to it. Six miles from his village you reach the gentle ascents of the foothills of the Alps, and the park-like slopes wooded with chestnut and walnut, where the patrician families of Treviso, of Vicenza, of Venice, have had, and still have, their country seats. Here in these places began Giorgione's intercourse with the best-bred life of his time. Two hours away was the Court of Catherine Cornaro and the gar-

den which the elegant Bembo celebrated in his "*Asolini*." The sportive, amorous discourses of Bembo's youth, long dialogues of love, are localized here; and who knows but that the stupendous cypress which yet stands, dense and black, on one of the hills of Asolo is the very cypress he mentions? Below Asolo was the park, or "Paradise," as it was called of Catherine Cornaro, for which Bembo furnished the design. Doubtless Giorgione saw and enjoyed all this. His patron was a famous captain who came with the ex-queen from Cyprus. Giorgione painted his son clad in complete armor, in the memorial picture which is one of the few indisputable works of his hand that has reached our day. Here it is in the church of St. Liberale, at Castelfranco, an immortal picture, and not one of the latest of his hand. The pale knight-at-arms, Tuzio Costanzo's son, killed in battle, is one of the noblest figures, full of the heroic and sad sentiment of a St. George or a Gaston de Foix, one's ideal knight. Above him the most beautiful Virgin sits abstracted, high enthroned in repose; a Madonna, not in adoration or with tender solicitude, contemplating the divine

child ; she does not look at him, and he is of no importance and the only feeble part of the picture. The Virgin alone is the object of chiefest interest ; not ideal, but refined, high-born, a lady of most lovely countenance, a type of cultivated and exquisite beauty. Giorgione celebrated something different from the religious ideal. He painted his personal sentiment of all that was adorable in the woman he loved.

Giorgione's subjects were the outcome of a most fortunate existence. Before betrayed love darkened it, how fine and liberal it was ! His subjects are depicted in, I may say they were suggested by, Bembo's "Asolini." What the Venetian poet described Giorgione saw in the elegant variety of the life of those noble Venetians, who, in spring and autumn, long before the English, were lovers of parks and gardens, of country life as it should be to the most cultivated people. The far-famed daughter of the Republic, the ex-Queen of Cyprus, drew the most illustrious persons to this enchanting region. But dialogues of love, and music, and garden parties and banquets and hunting, were not the whole of life even there. Ger-

man Emperor, and French King, and Roman Pontiff sent their captains and soldiers to wrest from the Venetians the castles and cities of this enchanting country. Borgia's own men-at-arms pillaged and burned their way through this coveted land, and the mistress of Asolo and of "Paradise" was twice compelled to seek safety in Venice. It is worth while to mention these diverse fortunes of noble life in the country about Castelfranco and Asolo during Giorgione's manhood. It was part of an actual experience which quickened the knightly spirit and developed the heroic ideal not less than the pastoral and courtly sentiment which he painted. All this was part of his own experience. Hence the intimate and private charm of his treatment of the one, his deep sense and noble rendering of the others. No later painter gives us anything like it. It was all so pictorial, so delightful and so noble that the "subject," apart from religious or pietist inspirations, naturally suggested itself.

These new subjects and this new style became so popular that the cleverest painters of his time tried to paint Giorgionesque pictures. What actually remains by his hand, but half a dozen pic-

tures, alone support his great name. His method is the perfection of oil painting. Titian did nothing which was not implied in the technique of Giorgione's work. And there was no actual advance beyond him save when Tintoret, with greater reach of dramatic power, and Veronese, with a new sense of decorative splendor, produced their stupendous compositions, the "Crucifixion" and the "Last Judgment," the "Marriage at Cana" and the "Triumph of Venice." We must admit that there is something in the scale and character of these works not dreamed of by Giorgione. He is, however, supreme in his way. Even Titian does not go beyond him in rendering the beauty of women. It is an immense satisfaction to get close to the very origins of his subjects, to the very sources which fed his sentiment of nature here on these hill sides, and in this level country where he was born. His name is held, like that of Raphael, as the measure of superior gifts. And yet one can count on one's hand the panels which support his great reputation. One writer assigns the glowing and delightful Giorgione of the Louvre to Palma Vecchio, and another attributes the cele-

brated Giorgione, formerly in the Manfrini Gallery, now in the possession of Prince Giovanelli at Venice, also to Palma. Giorgionesque they are, and we may boldly say never would have been painted but for him. They are his subjects, treated in his manner, and we may hold them, with the "Concert" at Florence, as part of the precious and delightful gift of his genius.

Much has been done reaching after his life and seeking his works to reshape and define both. Vassari's tale of his death by disgraceful disease is set aside as false. That he was a victim of the plague is accepted as fact by the latest writers. An Italian novelist has made of him an extravagant and melodramatic figure. Ridolfi says that he died broken-hearted, betrayed by Morte da Feltre and the woman he loved — she who sits as the Madonna in the picture at Castelfranco, she whose portrait is seen at Modena, and whose name on the back of the very panel now in the church of Castelfranco yet lasts with his own written words, which may be put into English as follows :

"Come, Cecilia
Come, hurry,
Thine own one waits for thee, Giorgio."

These light, living words, with a just sense of the sentiment of Giorgione's life, are repeated on the back of the tablet which he holds in his hand, — the marble tablet of the marble figure at Castelfranco; words of quick and impatient life, breathed from the long stilled lips of the immortal painter, Giorgione Barbarelli.





IN "TITIAN'S COUNTRY."

ONE morning of autumn I started from Cortina in the Tyrol to visit a hamlet high up on one of the grassy flanks of Antelao, an enormous pyramidal mass of naked rock rising several thousand feet above it. A walk of some hours carried me across the line between the Tyrol and Italy, and a short, steep climb from the main road took me to the hamlet of Vinego, a place of fifty or sixty châlets, with a little old church and an open space in front of it, from which I overlooked the narrow bed of the Boita, which foams and pours itself in deep defiles and through rocky gateways, and is perhaps without a space of smooth water from the beginning to the end of its wildly beautiful course; for it is a mountain torrent. It comes from still glaciers

eaten away by creeping mists from the Venetian lagoons and melted by summer suns, it is fed by hundreds of crocus-bordered brooks and the slant rain-washed rocks of mighty mountains.

Overlooking the flashing course of the Boita, and three or four villages sprinkled along the base or on the slopes of the mountains which shut in this high-lifted country, I waited full of admiration of its varied aspects. I turned to the church. It was closed. The good woman of the priest's house sent for the sacristan and invited me to wait in her kitchen. She at once busied herself blowing up a fire on the stone platform built in the centre of the kitchen,—the place of the hearthstone of every home in this region,—and over which is commonly seen an enormous rack of wrought iron; often wrought in the most interesting forms, and sometimes one or two hundred years old, and which a later taste finds sufficiently curious and beautiful to decorate a parlor, as a flower-stand. And in fact the antiquarians of Venice have brought from far and near just such wrought-iron *cavedones*, as they are called, for the gratification of artistic taste, which is seldom better pleased

than with these specimens of fifteenth or sixteenth century iron work. Presently the sacristan came in with his keys. To him the presence of a stranger was the advent of a person of consequence ; and not only to him but to the peasants at work below the hamlet. On my way up its steep path they had stopped and greeted me, and asked questions, and continued to watch me until I reached the hamlet, which seemed deserted. Only two women and several children came out of the smoky doorways when I crossed the open space in front of the church.

It is perhaps one of the most delicate and unworn pleasures of travel, this chance of visiting an out-of-the-way place, a remote nest of simple life, where men and women have transmitted traits and habits which have remained unchanged for the last three hundred years ; no current of the great world reaching them, no tide of revolution strong enough to rise to them. Protected by the very barrenness and poverty of their life from covetous power and proselytizing zeal which invade more accessible habitations, they would live and die like cattle but for the august ministrations

of a great historic religion which binds them to the rest of the world.

I explained to the sacristan my wish to see the church and its altar-piece, said to be by Titian, marvelling that such a poor and remote place in the Venetian Alps should ever have been rich enough, and ever with enough cultivated intelligence in it, to spend money for a picture by a famous Venetian painter. We went in. It was a small Gothic interior; no sign of Venetian or Byzantine influence in its form; plainly a little church built according to northern taste, and therefore the more appropriate to its position under the pinnacled rocks of this country. The picture over the main altar was curious enough, and not by Titian, though attributed to him. Over one of the side altars another picture, said to be by Titian, rewarded me for my pilgrimage to Vinego, for it was full of the royal repose and dignity and individual character of the great naturalistic painter; a noble and gracious work of the Venetian school, representing the Madonna and child, Saint Margaret and Saint Anthony. The painting of the head of the latter is powerful, and the virgin in

blue drapery is lovely to look at. Without pronouncing whether it is the work of Titian or his brother, it is to be appreciated for its large style and fine color. Here was something to admire; something to make one think; a masterpiece of painting all but hidden in a mountain hamlet, a hundred miles from Venice, and scarcely ever seen but by the few inhabitants of the place, and which perhaps would never be looked at except as an object of religious significance but for its supreme naturalism and its great beauty, which are sufficient to win attention independent of its purpose as a help to worship.

Can one too much admire the ancient policy of the Roman church which thus lodged in the midst of its humble believers so much beauty and so much precious expression of the great types of its life? Protestantism must forever remain barren among a people and in a country habituated to the moving charm of picture and image, which in their best forms are often placed before the most illiterate, and grace the common ways of life with sacred and lovely types, teaching dignity and tenderness, and showing to the simplest peasant

the enshrined pity and passion of the great ideals of Christian life, and which would forever remain strange to him but for just such pictures as this altar-piece, yet adorning the mountain church of Vinego.

I turned away from the dusk interior of the church and started to take the high road. By a tortuous and precipitous path I went down the other side of the Alp and trudged on to another village which claimed to have three pictures by Titian. An hour's walk brought me to Venas, and after some delay I entered its church and saw on the walls of the sacristy three unframed pictures, which, several years ago, were over the altar of a now abandoned church higher up on the mountain slope. They had been sold and taken to Venice, where the authorities at once ordered that they should be sent back to Venas. They were returned, but without the frames. The picture I saw was more like Veronese's than like Titian's work.

Two hours' further walk after dark brought me to Pieve di Cadore, Titian's birthplace. It is one of those appropriate spots associated with an illus-

rious name which satisfy the mind. Great men have come to us from mean places as far as worldly state is concerned, but seldom from places where Nature herself can give nothing. Beethoven from the Rhine, Tintoret from wave-washed Venice, Titian from the mighty rocks and green slopes of Cadore,—places which must affect the imagination of less gifted men. With equal gifts one must have equal associations of quickening and shaping power to reach what Titian reached. Here we see that the circumstances, the surroundings of genius hold a great part of its gift, and give something local to what is universal in it. Perhaps all genius is alike. In the conditions of its origin, and those which environ it, we must find the true cause of its difference of manifestation. I have long known this country of Titian. I had gone to it several years ago, to see for myself something of what had quickened the mind of one of the greatest painters of the world. I wished to trace in nature the origin of some of the noblest landscape painting. A brave and simple people are the people of Cadore. They are proud of their grand Titian, whose house is shown and his

very kitchen and bedroom. But the most satisfactory of all one's impressions of this country come from the glorious scenery of the valleys of Ampezzo and Auronzo and Pieve,—places once frequented by Titian. Nothing perhaps can exceed the exhilarating spectacle of nature in the Dolomite region. And at Pieve di Cadore is an unquestionable Titian, with his own portrait,—a most interesting work.

Sleeping at Pieve, the next morning I started for a hamlet hidden behind the nearer slope above Pieve to look for a picture by the Venetian Carpaccio, the great contemporary of the Bellinis. Carpaccio is one of the most interesting, one of the most Venetian of painters. It is strange to think of his work out of Venice. It is only at Venice that one may know much about him. And least of all would one expect to find an example of the patrician painter of Venetian life among the peasants of Cadore. With a rare distinction, and in the most interesting way, Carpaccio painted the sad and thoughtful faces of the builders and defenders of Venice. He painted them in the full splendor of their serious life, and

like Bellini, only in a lesser degree, gave a fine part of his genius to the painting of the Madonna. Not even Bellini's work is more expressive of purity and sweetness and *naiveté* than his strangely interesting children and lovely virgins; and as a painter of men in public life he is quiet, noble, and rich, and high-bred. Veronese's work seems theatrical and spectacular in contrast with Carpaccio's. He more than any other Venetian, and better, has painted the Venetians of the fifteenth century; men with strong, sad, high-bred faces and quiet, noble bearing, clad like princes. His men and maidens are wholly different from the opulent and luxurious men and women of that other and later painter of the public life of Venice, Paolo Veronese. The change of the Venetian type between the times of Carpaccio and Bellini and that of Veronese is most significant. It is suggestive of the difference between those who made Venice and fought for it, and the men who enjoyed it. Much like the difference between the Puritans of Plymouth Rock and the later Boston orators who celebrate their virtues and praise their austerity while they enjoy their own untroubled opulence.

and more liberal life. For there is a difference of time and habit between the men who endure and the men who enjoy. And he who paints the last best, like a Veronese — objective, splendid, painter in ordinary to Dives — cannot honestly like or understand or depict the severe, the austere, but wholly noble and firm faces of old men, the pale and heroic faces, the brilliant and knightly faces of the young gallants of Carpaccio's time, ready for boot and spur, and sword and lance, even though clad like parlor knights. What manliness, what resolution, what a delicate and high nature in them! What spirit and self-possession in the attitude of each one! These are not models posing for gentlemen. These are gentlemen, with the very habit and countenance of their time.

An hour's walk brought me to the hamlet of Pozzale. The clouds were low, and great masses of rolling vapor hid the mountains as I went toward the Marmarole peaks. The appearance of the place was poor; fifty or sixty rude stone houses and an ordinary church into which I went to look at the picture painted more than three hundred and fifty years ago by the delightful Car-

paccio. I found it high upon the wall by the side of the main altar, much the worse for its age, but still interesting, and with every trait of Carpaccio's style, and inscribed at the bottom, as was his custom, with his name, Victor Carpathius.

It would be difficult for me to give you an idea of this picture. The pleasure one has in old art is too delicate to be communicated to any but like-minded lovers of its precious and un-modern significance. If I tell you Carpaccio is a sincere and quaint and peculiar painter of the most individual life, with no sign of the fatal barrenness and conventionality of academic training, but that his expression is always full of a certain strenuous sweetness, I use words which indicate the kind, but are not sufficient to give the measure and quality, of the impressions you may receive from his unique art. I must content myself with letting you know that the Carpaccio at Pozzale is in five parts: the middle space holding a representation of the Virgin and Child, while at the base are charming little boys with flute and violin, and at the side there are apostles and saints. The whole picture is expressive of dignity, tenderness, and peace.

The laborious routine of life of this peasant place was here illuminated by a sign of the religion of love, by types of sorrow and pity, of tenderness and majesty. The beauty of goodness is here permanently placed before each generation of these peasants who never change, who seldom travel, who remain through all the years of life in the shadow and sunlight of their native hills. The simple order of their days, from birth to death, is unmarked by any interest but unremitting care for the conservation and continuation of their existence. Literature and science are wholly unknown to them. There is no book for them, like the Bible with its varied expression, which they read in common. And yet these peasants have a picture by Carpaccio which the finest and most cultivated mind of England would covet, and which illustrates one of the most attractive and universal influences of religion. By virtue of its permanent presence, a hamlet of five hundred souls is richer in beauty and has the advantage in this of an American village of several thousand inhabitants, full of capital, with a newspaper, a telegraph, and a railway.

The understanding of and love for a fine type of beauty, whether of the body or the soul, a Venus or a Madonna, is significant of something more admirable than our common need of the news of the day and our mania for rapid travel. To have your imagination and your senses touched and quickened by the Venus of Milos, or an Italian Madonna, is to live and enjoy, for the moment at least, what I may call the higher life of the senses and the soul. Our enormous appetite for reading, without much thought of the quality of what we read, and our facilities for rapid locomotion, leave us uncultivated, and add no quality to our life. To travel fast and see little is to be left crude and restless, ignorant of the nature and worth of the essential conditions of an admirable civilized life, — repose and harmony. If after running through Europe, in one or three months, we see nothing in a Madonna or a saint but a type of superstition, and remain indifferent to the ideas and sentiments which have moulded the most precious lives, and tempered and toned and chastened the thoughts of men and women for the last thousand years, and which have been an actual ministration of beauty

and devotion to Italy ever since she accepted the religion of Pity, and celebrated it with picture and image, and the imposing ceremonials of the Church of Rome, what have we gained with a newspaper, a railroad, and a telegraph?

It is worth while to consider this and ask ourselves if the most gifted and supple race since the Greek has nothing to teach us in spite of our science, our enormous appetite for books and newspapers, and in spite of our passion for rapid travel.

Art must give something to every town and village before our civilization can claim to afford sufficient nourishment for the higher part of human nature,—that is, its sympathy with and its sensibility to the supremest expression of reverence and love.

I had passed over the most interesting part of the Dolomite region, the part sometimes called "Titian's country," because it is not only the place of his birth, but its scenery is a part of the inspiration of his genius. The pinnacled rocks lifted in every strange and solemn shape, and smiting against the sky at twilight in great blue purple

masses; now barred by horizontal clouds from the sea, now crested by great fulgent forms of billowy splendor, have a large character, a grandeur unlike anything I have ever seen save in Titian's backgrounds.

It is worth something to walk through this region, if for no other purpose than to seek the inspirations and origins of a great painter's work, and see at once how liberal, how natural and how expressive is a great artist's treatment of nature.

He expresses the sentiment of its form and renders the impression of its color rather than copies so much brute rock and so much wooded land.

The sentiment of Titian's color is not from Venice. We must look to Tintoret's work for the softness of its gray sea-skies, and to Veronese for the joyousness of its silvery radiance. Titian's color, rich, solemn, deep, is touched with mountain gloom; it comes from the mountain skies, the mountain slopes of Cadore and Ampezzo. And it is at this time of the autumn, the time of his customary *villegiatura*, when the Venetians leave the lagoons for the country, that the tones of

nature are most sonorous and impressive. The skies are limpid yet deep in color, the mountains more boldly accentuated in form, and their flanks are clad in purple, green, and blue of surprising force.

Walking under these varied autumn skies, the grand long lines of the mountains on each side of the valley, the sloping hills all gold and bronze, and the dense masses of the many-leaved ash, making sombre spots of luxuriant foliage below the larches, dark and monotonous in the summer, now variegated with the warm and vivid green which gives a new interest to the melancholy tint of the darkling woods, I saw the very themes of the greatest landscape painter of the world,—greatest because he has expressed in the simplest form, with the most consummate art, the repose and gloom of mountain mass, the vigor and grandeur of trees, the flowing spaces of the hills, the sonorous color and farewell light of the sky and horizon, in relation to some hope or sorrow, some emotion of man, without which "this goodly frame, the earth," is but little more than "a sterile promontory."

On the way between Pieve di Cadore and Cortina d'Ampezzo you can traverse the region frequented by Titian; but it is nearer Cortina than Pieve that one sees the characteristic forms of mountain and wood and stream which he painted. The churches and chapels of the country we have seen still show above dingy altars pictures either by Titian or by some member of the Vecelli family. But the pictures by Francesco, by Cesare and by Marco Vecellio, though always Titianesque, are seldom to be mistaken for the work of Titian, whose art is more masterly, whose figures have a dignity of attitude, his faces a sweetness of expression and a sentiment of repose which make them a rest and a satisfaction. And this sentiment of majesty and peace was engendered in these high lifted valleys, strengthened by these mountains roofed with the spacious skies of autumn,—a still country, a country of large forms, of long lines, of deep tones; a country where all the influences are peaceful and impressive.

Titian was not a lover of the sea like Tintoret; nor a lover of the splendor of palace walls like Carpaccio and Veronese. Although he was sent

to Venice when only ten years old to study art, first with Zuccato the mosaicist, afterward with Gentile, and finally with Giovanni Bellini, in whose studio Giorgione of Castelfranco was his fellow-student; and although he passed the greater part of his long life in Venice, and had seen it in its greatest splendor — a splendor compared with which the Venice of to-day is a blanched wreck — this city of marble and gold never took the ascendancy in his mind over the impressions of his native mountains. He who had seen the sunset's light and color on the mighty rock-masonry of the walls of Antelao, of the Pelmo, of the Croda Melcora, of Duriano, — pyramids and pinnacles and towers of strange and terrific rock, — could hardly content himself with painting the sun's glow on the golden walls of Venice, on Doge's Palace of rose marble and white Istrian stone from far-off quarries, on gilded domes of church and chapel. Antelao alone is eleven thousand feet above the level of the sea. It rises six or seven thousand feet, the most part naked rock, above the valley where Titian was born. It is a great pyramidal shade of vaporous blue in the morning, a glowing

altar struck with sunset fire in the evening. At twilight it suddenly changes from a creamy rose and faints away into ghastly gray, into the chilled and pallid hues of a thing left by the sun to the coming of the night.

Cadore's skies and mountains and torrents seem to have been always present with Titian when he conceived and composed his great pictures. In the noble composition of the "Presentation" in the Belli Arte at Venice, he for once occupied himself with Venetian architecture, and, like Carpaccio, painted palace walls. But even in this work the strange far-off mountain, and vast sky and billowy bosomed clouds, and brown trees, and the slopes of the landscape background, are taken from his birthplace. And the one picture in which he has painted the lagoon and the ducal palace—the background of a picture now in the ducal palace itself—is the only example of his direct effort to render his impression of Venice. So great is this his difference of purpose from that of all the other Venetian painters that I take it as the characteristic note of his genius, and it is essential to the sentiment he conveys.

Titian was the painter of the dignity, of the repose, of the majesty of nature and of man,—something neither begotten nor learned in great cities. Tintoret was the painter of the passion, the energy, the tenderness, in a word, of all the moving elements of life,—things neither begotten nor learned in the country: they are the outcome of the struggle of men in great cities. I see that Tintoret, the saddened son of the lagoons, the great painter of movement, of the sea, of all dramatic phases of life, of the passion and changefulness of life, and of the forlorn grandeur of our humanity, is always companioned by the images and objects of his Venetian environment; that Titian of Cadore, coming from great mountains, from the spacious places and most restful forms of nature, never loses the influence of these great things, but that the lesson of the firm foundations of the rocks, and of the peace of infinite skies; in a word, the lesson of quieting grandeur of all the greater aspects of still and silent nature, affects his whole understanding and treatment of man; hence he paints women like great autumn fruits basking in golden beauty, and men who seem firm and

still, are fixed in brooding quiet, dark and majestic as mountains, always restful and impressive to look at; and he never gives his hand to express what I call Shakesperian play and wantonness, or the wild grace and tremendous action of a great dramatic genius born and moulded in the crowded ways of human life.





RAPHAEL'S BIRTHPLACE.

T was exhilarating to draw near to Urbino. Expectation stood on tiptoe, impatient to see the city on a hill where Raphael was born. Drawing near to it from the side of Pesaro, it is not visible until one gets within a mile or two of its high-lifted gates, when, after a sudden turn in the road, it appears in the clear air cresting a hill profiled against a luminous sky. And how intensely interesting! Did we not look on every side for Raphael's backgrounds? Did we not expect to see at every turn of the winding road the very thin-leaved trees he painted? Did we not expect to see the purist's landscapes? A landscape of precise form, of thin vegetation, of naked outlines, of celestial peace? And something of this we did see. And yet we

saw more of what may have suggested one of Maestro Giorgio's plates than one of Raphael's pictures: we saw the copper and gold iridescence of earth and sky, the naked hills of fine, rich clay, the richer arabesque of vines trailed from tree to tree, and the remoter distance of a faint blue. It were not to think too curiously to take all these impressions of color which one gets on the way to Urbino and within the barren slopes of the Apennines as suggestive of the colored majolica of the great artist. But when I stood on the outer walls of Urbino and looked over the landscape, the peaked and broken lines of range after range of mountain summits, I saw again Raphaelesque bits, and pleased myself with my sense of the source of Raphael's sentiment of nature: for although one recognizes the valley of the Tiber, in Umbria, oftenest in his work, here are the thin trees, here the limpid air and the blond color which we have learned to know as his own. We were indeed contented, for here Raphael was born. Fewer pilgrims come to Urbino than to Assisi for Giotte and St Francis. It is somewhat out of the way in the Apennines, and but for the greater

name of its son, and for its old fame as a centre of Italian culture, why should one be here? It is the seat still of one of the ancient universities of Italy, and it is ennobled by its ducal palace. It is indeed a place worthy of the most honored pilgrimage.

The palace of the Dukes of Urbino is one of the most remarkable buildings in Italy, a great structure, imposing and unique in character. Its outer and inner walls, the marble casings of its doors and windows, are full of the most richly and exquisitely designed and sharply cut decorative work; flower and fruit borders of rare invention, of an opulent taste. These no doubt had their due influence as a stimulus and as a memory on Raphael's later awakened taste for arabesques,—awakened at sight of the newly discovered painted walls of the baths of Titus, full of strange and capricious and bright pagan transformations of flowers and fruits and animals and human figures. Magnificence of cultivated taste and love of a sumptuous dwelling never went beyond the decorative work of the palace at Urbino. Now its interior courts are grass-grown; its pavements

broken and displaced ; its closed chambers, vast, vacant, desolate, are abandoned ; its walls, once covered with tapestries, are bare. All that could be carried away has been taken from it. The doors and chimney-pieces, and ceilings, and window-casings remain proof of the extraordinary art which was lavished upon it. Many of the doors are of inlaid wood, full of consummate designs of figures of fine style and character, by some artist whose name is not even known, but the peer of Lorenzo Lotto and of Mantegna for severe outline and strong character.

There is a famous sculptured frieze of dancing Cupids with gold wings, above the fireplace of one of the greater halls of white marble, relieved against a painted blue background : a lovely band ; twelve dimpled, chubby, naked boys. Three make music on pipes and tambourine, and lead the dance ; the others run forward with linked hands, in varied movement, a gladsome troop of joyous children, light as blown petals. What delightful figures to look at, to have in front of one on winter nights, over the great, wide, deep fireplace blazing with crackling logs ! What a chim-

ney-piece! Italy has very beautiful work of this kind, but anything comparable to this one I have yet to see. Its liberal proportions are not a small part of the fine impression it makes; and it is one of the works of art I should like to see copied, and in some private house, or in our museum at home. It would be an admirable possession, holding, as it does, so much of beauty, and representative of the best period of Lombard sculpture; for it is the work of a Lombard. Whenever the greater Lombard sculptors touched the stone they marked it with a grace of form, a charm of design all their own — the charm of low, flat relief in their figures, of pure lines, of most delicate emphasis. Their decorative borders are sharply cut, and most fertile of fancy. They are the only Italian sculptors who really show a wide and tender love of nature, delighting in flowers and fruits and vines and leaves and birds, and all their treatment of this material is shaped by a feminine sentiment of beauty. It is not impressive, but it is charming and full of elegance, the unfailing quality and the characteristic form of all Lombard work. They left it to the severer

Florentines, and the awful genius of Michael Angelo, to ignore the world as a place of exuberant beauty of vegetation. They did not take the human figure as an isolated fact of life, but as the crowning grace of a world full of lovely forms. Their decorative sense put the whole of nature under tribute. Did they not see the hedges of Lombardy, that garden of Italy, with their mass of flowers, their blossoming luxuriance, their riotous grace? How could one hold to a cold or a severe sense of form coming from such a country? In the Lombard fields one must seek the origin of these fruit and vine borders of Ambrogio di Milam, the sculptor of the decorative work in the ducal palace at Urbino,—a place built by a great lord of fine taste, of wise munificence, who made of a little mountain town "a modern Athens," as it was called.

The Duke of Urbino, Federigo of Montefeltro, is the model of a great and cultivated man and ruler. In some features of his character the democratic sentiment reached an ideal expression. He interested himself personally in the common ways of common men, and he surrounded himself with

the most distinguished. He was bound to the people by his good sense, by his humanity; he was bound to artists and scholars by his need of noble living, of a brilliant existence.

It is not difficult to understand the princely taste, the instincts of high cultivation of Raphael, coming as he did from such a centre of brilliant and accomplished life; a place renowned for all noble courtesies, all fine emulations, all fair presences. Force and goodness were fitly housed in the palace at Urbino in the person of Federigo of Montefeltro and his wife, and the splendor and urbanity of their life transmitted something even to the generation of Raphael, and must have counted for something in the life of a growing boy even outside the palace.

Like Titian, Raphael was sent from his native place to study under one of the most famous masters of his time. Like Titian he went to a society of men of superior gifts and achievements. Stimulus, fine companionship, great examples, were Raphael's from his first years at Urbino to the dazzling and smiling prosperity of his Roman days. How like a young Apollo he must have been there,

the full-risen sun of that splendid day of Italian art! For he was not overshadowed even by the genius of Michael Angelo, then in the plenitude of his force. And did not the great Leonardo turn away from Rome feeling it was not large enough for three such men as Raphael, Michael Angelo, and himself.

Twenty-seven years after Raphael's death Titian, then seventy years old, on his way to Rome, to which he was invited by the Pope and Cardinal Bembo, stopped at Urbino. The Duke of Urbino himself went to meet him. It was for him that Titian painted that world-famous Venus now in the gallery at Florence. It was painted from the mistress of the Duke. And what a picture it is from a man of seventy! A supreme work, the nudity of which elicited some provincial remarks from so cultivated a man as the late George S. Hillard, in his "Six Months in Italy." And on this subject even Hawthorne spoke from his native parish, and not from a great centre of world-life, which teaches us to discriminate between a nude thing of beauty and a naked and immoral exhibition. Up here in Urbino they know the differ-

ence. And grand old Titian made a supreme picture, unsurpassed as a thing of beauty, perfectly Greek in its sinless sensuousness, in its serene and conscienceless loveliness; a beautiful form like a flower; like light, attracting and gladdening; a truly pagan work, with no taint of the cloister, no suggestion of suffering. It is impossible to connect the idea of transgression of moral law, or bad associations, with Titian's Venus. It in no way comes under the just censure which rightly falls upon the painters of most of the nude figures of the Paris *Salons*, for they are significant of bad company. Titian's Venus suggests nothing low.

Raphael's house at Urbino — relatively comparable to a brown-stone front in New York, being one of the better houses — is in the principal street. Owing to the judicious zeal and generosity of an Englishman, who contributed largely to the purchase of the house, it is now set apart forever, and open to the public, as Raphael's house. An inscription on the wall of one of the front rooms, put there by the "Academy of Raphael," honors Mr. Morris Moore with the following inscription in Italian: "To Mr. Morris Moore, of London, who, with a con-

siderable sum, furnished the means of facilitating the purchase of this house where Raphael was born, the Academy with utmost gratitude places this. VI. April, MDCCCLXXIII." The municipality of Urbino gave Mr. Morris Moore the freedom of their city in recognition of his fine service.

The situation of Urbino is delectable. Here a young life could grow in good air, with fine associations, with beautiful inspirations, made alert, bright, by the very impressions of every day. From here there is a wide range of vision: Mountain peak to mountain peak lifted above the blond-colored soil. Looking east, afar off, beyond the ranged and broken hills, and many a castle tower and wall-encircled town, on heights of red and yellow earth, you see the blue Adriatic sleeping in stillness, against the luminous sky. It added another pleasure to think the young Raphael saw this, and that sea and mountain were a part of the scenery of his fortunate youth, and that none of the greater inspirations of nature were lacking to his boyhood. And yet Raphael died too young to have these first impressions take the customary ascendancy which they have with men in later life.

He seldom visited Urbino. Had he lived beyond middle age, no doubt, like Titian, like most men, the place of his birth above all, love of nature, would have drawn him back to his native hills. The need of our later life — which binds us to our first years of conscious being, by the sweet compulsion of sentiment, when we "babble of green fields" — is a sign of the life of the soul, when we have intimations that "the world is too much with us" and cannot satisfy us.

Raphael, leading the life of a Prince and a man of recognized genius at the Vatican, did not live to make this common experience. Hence no sweet memories of the rest of his native hills is associated with his name as it is with the equally fortunate and longer-lived Titian, who made so frequent visits to the mountains of Cadore, where he was born.

As to the name of Raphael, is it less significant to us now than it was to others fifty years ago? And have the dissolvents of modern criticism diminished the fair proportions of his fame? It is not to be denied that the tendency of modern art is away from Raphael's; and modern art criticism has taken us from him and changed our

estimates of some of his work. The "Transfiguration" of the Vatican is no longer considered to be the stupendous picture which Mr. Emerson with the rest of the world thought it to be fifty years ago. But criticism and the modern spirit are ineffective against the immortal part, which is the greater part of the divine Raphael's genius. If the purity of his early works is too celestial for the coarse and theatrical sympathies of the baser schools of art, and he seems cold and unmagnetic in the symmetrical nobility and ideal largeness of his later style, it is because we have no sense of divine things, no perception of the proportioned majesty and beauty of the ideal in art. We have given the sign of our own being, of our sympathies and aversions and limitations. We have not reached the flawless genius and crystalline forms of Raphael. His art is above fashion and it is beyond criticism.





A ROYAL SEAT.

AHOEVER has read the "Asolani" of Cardinal Bembo must wish to see the place which it celebrates and find again its gardens of delight. For, old-fashioned and involved, and slow in dramatic action as it is, with its endless refinements on the nature of love, it lets us have glimpses of a charming spot and makes one ask: Where is the once famous country seat of Catherine Cornaro? and is there anything to be seen of it?

It is a pretty story, that of the Queen's favorite maid of honor, the beautiful Fiametta, in honor of whose marriage Bembo wrote his "Asolani."

Berenice and Gismondo and Perottino, and Lavinello, and the old hermit—all most gentle people—conduct themselves with modesty and

grace, and, with fine manners and leisure, talk of love as though it were the sole business of the day. These conversations took place a long time ago — centuries ago. The Queen and her pleasant guests were here at Asolo, and below at her greater palace on the plain. Some trace of attractive life must still exist outside of Asolo. Where then, we repeated, is her once famous country seat. This question I put at Asolo, in front of the old tower of the castle which was once the home of the ex-Queen. In spite of being told that there was nothing to be seen of her ancient residence, on the plain, I felt sure that some traces of the splendid life of her time might reward my effort to get the very stuff with which imagination builds anew its dreamy fabric. I wished to go over the ground between delightful Asolo and the enchanting residence which formerly housed the court of the Queen of Cyprus. Walls and towers and all the gorgeous retinue of sixteenth century life have been swept away, but the level fields, the winding roads, the running streams, the silver and golden tones of sky and woods, and all the material of nature would yet renew for me some coveted im-

pressions. And I thought my experience must be incomplete without this visit to the very ground of the famous Paradise of the lady from Cyprus.

Leaving the one winding street of Asolo, its arched arcade, the faded frescoes of its old walls, its square tower and castle rock, by a charming road turning between chestnut slopes, whose bending and flowing spaces descend to the plain with many a grassy glade, and many a golden vineyard, and many a luring path, we drove toward El Parco, the site of Queen Cornaro's park and palace. All this is outside of the way of travel, and guide-books do not lead us to it. It therefore promised us something unworn in the way of old Italy.

For one must admit it, there are threadbare places of travel in Italy, and there are the commonplaces of experience which cannot quicken any spark in an old traveller. But Asolo and El Parco are the very places to gratify the eye and start a fresh expectation of pleasure. One hour's drive brought us to a narrow way bordered with aspens, and willows, and acacias, and walnut and poplar trees. And what a fresh stream sped along

the roadside! Presently we halted before the gateless entrance of what appeared to be an immense long farmhouse, such as is common in this part of Italy. A heap of husked corn lay on the ground: several peasants were standing in the sun and civilly welcomed us, and half a dozen children stopped their play to look in wide-eyed wonder at the strangers who stepped forward.

One glance at the front of the long building gave us a shock of surprise. Farmhouse, cattle-shed, and barn it was indeed: a structure put to uses that the sanest communist would have approved; but part of the famed palace of the Queen of Cyprus it was none the less, and the sign of its lordly state and beautiful aspect yet brightened its peeled walls and set over the peasant's home the features and forms of its old life of elegance. It was more than we expected, to see the full length of the great front covered with warm-colored frescoes and decorative patterns of sixteenth century art. So much! and perhaps the work of a master! For tradition tells that Giorgione himself painted the portrait of the Queen on horseback on the tower over the en-

trance to the park, and why should we not be looking now upon the vestiges of his work or of his school? All one's faculties of admiration are alert in front of a fragment of a fine time of art. One seeks to possess something so near ruin or hastens to dismiss some pretension so close to greatness. And what a contrast this great painted front of a peasant's home sheltering cattle, and beings but a step above the very animals they care for! It is a great building, with arches and columns and carved capitals, its whole surface covered with color and decorated with subjects of curious interest and much beauty.

As to the frescoes they are really worth much attention.

Neptune drives his dolphins through the sea; Apollo chases Daphne; St. Jerome beats his breast; Love dominates Force; fauns pipe to nude nymphs. These are the subjects yet to be seen in bright and harmonious color. An aged peasant-mother pointed out Neptune to me. It was Ceres infirm and old showing me the older god of the sea. As to the frescoes they are of the time of Giorgione and Pordenone,

similar to those which we find in many of the north Italian cities and villas. The old Venetians well knew that, in spite of the fact that fresco-painting is perishable and greatly exposed to weather, the outer wall of their houses was the best place for it. For fresco-painting is too cold and thin a decoration away from sunlight. Struck by the sun, it glows and is splendid enough,— very different from the garish or cold effect it has under cover. It is essentially meant for scenic effect, and as such was universally employed by the great painters of the north of Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And even when it is so ruined that with difficulty one can make out the subject, it remains decorative, and redeems old walls from the blankness of uninteresting ruin. We naturally reached this conclusion before the painted front of what remains of Catherine Cornaro's home. And what country but Italy could show such a contrast between the outer walls of a once noble dwelling and the life it now shelters? All the radiant paganism of its significance outside; within, a bit of the kingdom of piggery itself! In its bright

hour made to entertain the mind with the most joyous subjects, and wholly given to that classical mythology which for a brief time in Italy actually struggled successfully against Christianity; for here it is all implied by these figures of Pan and Apollo and Neptune, and listening nymphs. One curious fresco which must have greatly amused the idle ladies and gallants of the lettered and sportive life of this courtly place is worth describing. It represents a beautiful woman seated on the back of a gallant of the day, who is on all fours, his face bridled like a horse, a bit in his mouth, the reins of which are held by the fair rider seated in smiling disdain on his back.

The old fresco must have stirred silvery laughter in many a fair guest first coming within this court of love. It brought back, to the mind's eye, the reality of the light pleasure of old life here.

As for the more classical subjects that are still to be seen, they are really superior work. We looked in vain for further traces of the bright and untroubled glory of this place. The old peasant told me he recollects fifty years ago when there

were towers standing, another wing of the building, and statues. These last were carried off to Padua. Now there are not even any old trees. Here were fountains fed from the nearer hills by an aqueduct. Here were great avenues and groves of laurel and exotic plants ; and here the ex-Queen entertained a deputation from Cyprus, "a company of persons of distinction followed by thirty pages and numerous servants ;" here she entertained "the Marchesa of Mantua, followed by her knights and two hundred servants ;" here came Navagero, Venetian Ambassador to Spain, he whose gardens at Murano are spoken of to this day, one of the poets of his time, who with Bembo adorned with grace and elegance this brilliant life.

Catherine Cornaro brought her taste for this sumptuous country life from Cyprus, where the wildest extravagance was indulged in by the nobles of the island ; they were said to squander their wealth in hunting and tournaments. A certain count kept five hundred hounds, and every two hounds required the care of one man. No person of consideration kept less than twelve falconers. The King of Cyprus, high prelates, bishops, and

princes, and barons, and knights all indulged in this luxury of a splendid and sportive country life. The beautiful Venetian patrician girl who had gone to marry the King of Cyprus, dowered by the Venetian republic as an only daughter with one hundred thousand gold ducats, later abdicating her sovereignty of the island at the urgent and persistent request of the Venetian Senate, was given this whole region of Asolo in the province of Treviso, and here she brought the royal pastimes of Cyprus. We thought it worth some trouble and time to see much of this gay country as we walked over its grassy fields. Millions of crocuses brightened the sward ; swift, pure streams still freshened the ground. It was all most delightful, the place, the hour, and the sentiment of the day. The whole wide landscape basking in the light and warmth of autumn made us realize that we were in a chosen spot of the world. No part of Venetian territory, outside of Venice, is more interesting than this ; there is none which has more of history, of romance, and of art to renew one's sense of a splendid life ; and all this is now conveyed in a few names, and suggested by a few places,—

the Park of the Queen, the Villa Mazer, the Castle of Colalto, the tower of Eccellino,—in this cultivated, rich, varied country,—a country of walled towns and cities, of castles and towers and woods, and of pastoral quiet in sight of the solemn barriers of the Venetian Alps, through whose rocky gateways a day's journey will take one to the fantastic crags and pinnacles of the Dolomite world. This part of Italy is not the Italy of the orange and olive and pine; it is not classical Italy; but it is the Italy of romance, of high culture, of intense life, of great intellectual activity; and, without either the pretension or the austerity of Tuscan or the pride of Roman, it built Venice, created the Venetian state, Venetian art, and the grand men who brought Eastern civilization and Greek culture to Italy. See this country of their life, bosky, graceful, park-like, at the foot of the Alps, on this Trevesian plain, amid these delightful hills which lift and rise to Asolo, and from Asolo break away and fall and rise again with enchanting diversity to the greater barriers of the grander mountains.



TINTORET AND HIS CONCEPTION OF SATAN.

 F all the sadness of the wasted and worn aspect of things at Venice, not the least sad is the condition of most of Tintoret's grandest creations, now foul with the disfigurements of mildew, and all but invisible in the dead blackness which has crept over their splendor. Enough is yet to be seen to let us appreciate extraordinary work. His unsurpassed "Bacchus" yet glows in loveliest amber and silver tones. His greater compositions are still visible, vital, energetic; and his Satan is yet to be seen, a superb expression of life and intellect. It is alive with all the power of the grandest imagination of the Renaissance, and it is wholly free from any taint of the mediaeval spirit. It is not improbable that it was seen by the grave and accomplished young

Milton when he came to Italy. If it did not generate the beauty and majesty of the Satan of *Paradise Lost*, one may venture to say it very likely confirmed the English poet, at least, in his conception of Lucifer, the Son of Morning, and led him to give to the fallen angel a very different shape from anything which Christian or mediæval art had suggested.

Ever since Rio wrote his "*Art Chrétien*," there has been an increase in the current of appreciation which sets toward Tintoret. Without following the conscientious Rio, and without gleaning from the pages of Ruskin, to whom we are gratefully indebted for some splendid phrases concerning Tintoret's work, let me bring before you one of his grandest conceptions; a picture, in fact, which has been overlooked by those who have written most fervidly about the great Venetian. I mean his Satan in the picture of "*The Temptation*." I believe Ruskin is the first writer of our time who even mentions it, and his commentary is all too brief. More recently J. Addington Symonds, in a volume of verse, has a sonnet about the picture, which he describes with fulgent phraseology

in his "Renaissance in Italy." The picture is a part of the decoration of the golden hall of the Scuola di San Rocco.

To be fully on the high plane of Tintoret's extraordinary genius one must see and study his works at Venice. And it is not enough to recognize the admitted greatness of his "Miracle of St. Mark." One is bored to hear that one picture always mentioned by all writers as though it were the only indisputable proof of his supreme power as a painter.

His genius has flashed and thundered through most of the churches and palaces of Venice, and yet breaks the sad eclipses of time, of mildew, of neglect, in solemn color, in gracious and noble form.

See his great picture of "The Temptation." Satan lifts himself before the grieved and all but fainting Christ with a sudden movement, a mocking smile, and the ardor of a wilful spirit. With a derisive expression and an imperious gesture he thrusts forward and upward two stones, demanding: "If thou be God make these stones into bread." He has sprung up charged with desire.

Every proud muscle expands with the glory of his strength and the passion of his purpose. His mighty arms are extended, the rich plumage of his wings is alive, around his loins flutters a drapery of pallid rose, while about his arms are gleaming armlets which shine in the shadow with a sinister light. He is young and beautiful like Bacchus; he is a breathing type of passionate entreaty. His fruity face is made heroic by the energy it expresses; his ripe lips and the rounded fulness of chin and cheek give to his countenance all the seductiveness of voluptuous form. The force and proportion of his body, the power expressed by all the lines of his graceful figure, his Atlantean shoulders and the lightness with which he seems to have sprung up in the pride of his will before the all but spent and meek spiritual man—Christ, lone and famished—produce an impression to which nothing of the kind in the whole domain of art seems comparable. Goethe's Mephistopheles as a type of evil is cold, unattractive and intellectual only, and Milton's Satan a proud debater, compared with the impassioned, radiant Satan of the great Venetian. Tintoret's glowing

and splendid devil primarily expresses passion, the tempting and Satanic force next to and besetting our spiritual life.

With what impassioned sympathy, with what dramatic truth, Tintoret has felt and understood the whole situation! His Christ is worn and haggard and drooping. He leans forward from his rude shelter in the tree to reply to the grand gesture and fervid appeal of the Tempter. Contrast this plain, this unattractive person, this wan and famished man, the sanctity of suffering about him, with the glory of the plumed and jewelled Tempter, who seems to dilate before him. Look at the pitiful face of Christ, the faded hue of his cheek, the meek gesture of his hand; then see the glitter, and the abounding energy, of Satan; the brightness of his eyes, the gleam of his armlets, the crisp flutter of his wings, the rapid flowing folds of his rose drapery; and see how everything about him is vitalized with the burning ardor of life: you see the Temptation as it has never before or since been painted; you see Satan, the spirit of carnal desire and unbelief, of intellectual pride and will, such as no one before Tintoret had

represented him. And by all that this work expresses of glowing life, by the swiftness and vigor of its style, by the impressive scheme of its color, by the breadth and effect of its masses, by its largeness of form, it must be considered one of the great pictures of the world. The energy of the execution, the simple and superb brush-work of the picture, have never been surpassed nor even equalled save by Velasquez, who owed not a little to Tintoret. Observe the crisp leaf painting, and see with what a grand manner and how few lines the very place of the Temptation is suggested,— a mountain height, where everything struggles with the elements; the rude shelter of the tree, the drear stones thrown about, the steep descent of the mountain side, and the vast luminous space against which Satan is so superbly seen.

And how remarkable are the eyes of Satan! Tintoret has given them, beautiful as they are, the same glitter, the same small, evil-looking light which is seen in the eye of the serpent. While his Satan has the face of a Bacchus, young, full, fruity, he also has the shining, fascinating look of the snake. He has combined the still, intense,

relentless look of the serpent with the proud and opulent beauty of youth; implying an embodied force which can influence, but which is itself proof against influence, the truly Satanic life being made wilfully to work its passionate evil way. What conception, what figure in the whole range of literature or art, can be compared with this glorious adolescent, leaping in virile power, this beautiful sensual devil of the great Venetian? He has splendor, force, and grace; he is glowing and intense,—the very genius of life. He is as Tintoret has painted him as much a great type as the Jove of Phidias or the Moses of Michael Angelo. But he has no antetype in art. The conception in this shape cannot be traced to any preceding epoch. It is wholly Tintoret's, and our homage is due to the great Venetian that he delineated this young Colossus of Passion, the Angel of the Temptation, the Satan who is the great enemy of the spiritual man who renounces and endures.

A modern painter of some truth and sweetness of sentiment, and not without imagination, albeit pallid and feeble as a colorist, I mean Ary Schef-

fer, painted the Temptation. His Satan is merely a muscular criminal.

Between the famous Belgian's conception and execution and Tintoret's is the wide gulf which separates lofty inspiration and the tame offspring of a modern sentimentalist.

Tintoret, like the most modern man, and like the noblest, did not conceive the power of evil in any loathsome shape. No fact is more significant of his superiority, not only to the mediæval but also to the opulent and lawless conceptions of the Renaissance mind, than that in the whole range of his inventions nothing repulsive ever had a place. Dante and Spenser, and many of the mediæval painters represented evil by deformities, and played with or handled the loathsome and grotesque. But Tintoret never dealt with or touched these familiar things of the unclean mind. He shows us the drama of life not as a bestial or a fantastic experience. He is profoundly human. His Christ is no supernatural being; he is a guileless, suffering soul. His devil is an embodied force, which lives to enjoy, to appropriate, to possess. He is appetite and will sheathed in a

supple and superb form, potent over every one who has not accepted the life of renunciation and suffering, which is the Christian and spiritual as opposed to the worldly and Satanic life. He is no cloudy apparition which we look at as an idle fiction of the mind; he is a great personality, throbbing and dilating before something he does not understand—that is, meekness and abnegation and patience, which are strange and inconceivable to his carnal mind.

It is worth while to compare this face of Satan as the Tempter upon the mountain with Tintoret's delightful Bacchus of the Doges' Palace. The type of face is not unlike; but all that is tender and adolescent desire, all that is expectant, melting and charming grace of love in the light and fruity Bacchus, is lawless, crested, and fulgent in the face of Satan. All that is Greek and restfully beautiful, all that is blithe and sweet in Bacchus, is transformed in the face of Satan, which is heated, troubled, ironical, and covetous.

In spite of the ruinous defacement by the change and neglect of three hundred years, this blackened picture is still tremendous and beautiful in effect.

It is, as a conception, an anticipation of the greatest imagination of the seventeenth century — and now only are we on a level with it as a colossal idea, the outcome of a great romantic and naturalistic genius, matching the idealism of Michael Angelo and the radiant energy of expression of Victor Hugo.

It must seem strange that anything so remarkable should have failed of adequate attention. Until recent years there has been a want of satisfactory understanding of Tintoret. The eighteenth century preferred smooth painting and insipid or frivolous subjects. Fifty years ago we had no sense of dramatic art in painting. We liked what was then called classic art; worse, we liked Guido and Carlo Dolce, or the brutalities of the Bologna school. Later Rio, Ruskin, Gautier, and Taine led us away from our older guides. Now Ruskin and Symonds may be said to support any emphasis and warmth of admiration of the great Venetians. In art, as in other matters, we cannot live wholly in old clothes, and opinion is reshaping thought and changing our relation to the masters. We cannot rest upon ancient formulas, — not even

upon the accredited masters. A thinker will upset all the routine ways of admiration, and show us there is something more in the world than the best accredited works within reach in great galleries and known to everybody. It is well to bow before the great name of Titian; it is well also to know that his mighty rival's works are blackening and rotting in Venice. They win personal appreciation where the ruin and defacement of flaming wax and dripping dampness and the obscurity of impoverished churches still invest them. They are yet too quick with life to come within the approved conditions of academical or conventional art.

Only the *elite* of thinkers about art have had a full appreciation of the meaning and power of Tintoret's work. They only have seen and said within our time that Tintoret's furious brush-work meant something more than vulgar haste and incompleteness, something more than impatience with the obstacles or difficulties of perfect expression which great artists love to conquer. Tintoret's swift and mighty stroke meant power, his impetuous execution meant life.

We needed the best of our nineteenth century breadth of mind and spirituality to appreciate the reach and originality of his genius — to see that its very tumultuous and supple expression was the sign of something grander and deeper than the old ideals of art. We could not appreciate Tintoret without obtaining something more than the Greek, something more than the Gothic, something more than the Renaissance had given us to interpret life and art. We needed our nineteenth century with its deep sentiment of humanity and its naturalistic tendencies ; we needed to be delivered from the grotesque and childish of the Gothic, freed from mediæval superstitions, liberated from the heartless idealisms of the Renaissance, and weighted with more of sorrow than Greek art has embodied. Of this impassioned, sympathetic sense of life which begot the romantic school of Delacroix and Victor Hugo in France, Tintoret is the first and greatest expression in painting. It would be a mistake to take him only as a representative of power and audacity, for his power is full of sweetness, and his audacity is often accompanied by the grace of pity. There is, in fact, a

solemnity and a tenderness in his work which lifts him above all the great religious painters. His sentiment is comprehensive, and it is searching. He seems to have felt profoundly the significance of suffering. His portrait in the Louvre is most interesting. It is like the face of a warrior, of a man worn by many combats — a solemn old face, a grand face, full of the records of obstinate struggle, of spent fire, of stilled passion and deep brooding thought.





A GREAT DAY AT ST. PETER'S.

DREAD of the Roman summer keeps strangers away from Rome at the time when it is most Roman. The burning hours of the Italian sun give pitiless splendor to its empty piazzas, Saharas of solitude for a good part of the day, in the glare of which you see and hear the refreshing sound of an unfailing fountain.

The galleries of the great palaces and the cool spaces of churches alone are inviting — places where space is historical and impressive. Elsewhere, apart from the more crowded streets of the poorer quarters, Rome in summer is a place of great solitudes. It has solitudes within solitude. Outside, the solitude of the scorched wastes of the Campagna; within, the solitude of the greater ruins, of deserted gardens, of vineyards, of villas,

all full of the sentiment of waste and melancholy things, of still and ancient things, where silence is supreme, but where art and nature have so much to give to you. What does the winter resident or visitor, or the wiser stranger who comes for the awakening charm of the Roman spring, know of the overwhelming fulness of sensation of Italy in summer, and of these places of Rome's unique and immense character? As little do they know what St. Peter's is on a day of great festival,—the festival of the patron saint of Rome honored by the whole Roman people.

Then Rome shows her face and shoulders, her grand, placid face, her grand shoulders, sculptur-esque, impressive, beautiful. Then, instead of eruptions of red guide-books, and curious groups of English and Americans, to whom Italy is only a museum, with expectant custodians, impudent couriers, grasping hotel-keepers, and importunate beggars, you really see and are interested by the people of Rome. They throng all the streets leading to the bridge of St. Angelo, and pass under Bernini's marble angels, whose extravagant action — overdone grace of sinuous lines of supple limbs

and flying draperies — you accept as a decorative part of a bright and varied life, — Italian life, — profuse, licentious, the life of a people of genius, that is to say, neither stinted nor circumspect, but free and full, gushing in smooth excess of work like Bernini's, but lifted in grandeur of compact force and mighty power in Michael Angelo's.

We go with the crowd across the bridge of St. Angelo, past the castle — an imposing mass of masonry — to the great piazza of St. Peter's, one of the greater stone deserts of Rome, where we see with delight the two beautiful fountains pouring showers of water over the marble lips of giant cup and basin, brimming with delicious freshness. Between them, in the midst of the piazza, Egypt's red granite obelisk, and beyond the great steps, the vast portals, the huge façade, and the dome of St. Peter's.

For once the shrunken splendor of Catholic Rome seems to redeem itself. Life takes its full place in its old ways. Though the piazza is still empty, beyond on the steps thousands of Liliputians, sprinkled there, move forward to the wide-

open doors; thousands of people, but no crowd, no hurry, no confusion. The festa of the patron saint of Rome brings out Romans, and Romans know there is room for the world within as without the walls of St. Peter's. The glare of summer is in the sky. A dazzling and serene light inundates the piazza. Against the radiance of an Italian day, above the giant colonnade of enormous pillars, half enclosing the piazza, you see the grandiose statues of august personages,—perpetual witnesses of the concourses of Christian Rome. At no other time does so much of Rome's own proper life surge up to pour itself in St. Peter's, save when the Pope gives his benediction from the Vatican. Pascal said that man is a reed, but a reed that thinks. Seen on the steps of St. Peter's, men and women are like so many insects; but, if insects, they are insects that worship, moving forward as insects swarm, not from reason, but moved by the instinct of worship, of homage to something greater than themselves; connecting themselves in their narrow life by a simple act of reverence with the mighty world of the past, with the very life of their race; get-

ting from a popular festival a draft of universal life; showing universal sentiments, without which the local exigencies of a narrow existence would stupefy them.

Going up to the temple on a great day of religious festival is significant of a wider horizon than one's own personal life. It is part and proof of civilization and of a living sense of history and a living imagination. Worship, whether it enlists the understanding as with Protestants, or touches the imagination as with Romanists, or satisfies the reason as with Positivists, is for the time being both the intense expression of personal life and the most complete deliverance from it, lifting us to the region of the universal and fusing us with our common humanity. And St. Peter's on a day of great festival means this deliverance from the private and personal, and communion with the infinite. It is then like a great reservoir of religious life, and not a private faucet and domestic tap-pipe of our own, for our own local needs; it does not mean anything individual and temporary. When the whole of Rome makes act of presence, and when in fact the world is within St. Peter's,

St. Peter and the Pope himself are but incidents. The temple itself embraces something more universal than an august personage or a great name. Roof and dome are like another sky, under which a man walks in conscious life exalted and abased, — exalted by a sense of the grandeur of his work, and abased by the insignificance of his life, a glow-worm under “a roof fretted with golden fire.” It is much — it is in fact a privilege, and holds a revelation, to be in the mighty basilica on St. Peter’s day, when it is really a place of living service and not an empty show. Its huge piers draped in scarlet damask, its vast perspective full of golden sunlight, and of the blue smoke of incense, which in the distance is like the blue haze of our autumn landscape, its shining pavement covered by the whole world of Rome, dense as autumn leaves, filling but not crowding the church, — all this combined makes an impression of splendor, of color, of size, of multitude beyond anything in my experience.

The glory and magnificence of St. Peter’s at this moment is stupendous. All the cold emptiness of its usual aspect, all the oppressiveness of

its ungraspable and immeasurable grandeur has given place to the proportioned majesty of a place of universal worship. So grand, so impressive, so magnificent in color and effect and space, that even the glistening-robed bronze statue of St. Peter, the papal tiara gleaming with precious stones, newly placed on its brazen head, and a great amethyst ring newly placed on its finger of bronze, before whom a denser crowd of people pressed to kiss its toe, and looking, as it did, like some dusky idol of an Asiatic religion — it the soul and centre of Rome's own worship, seemed only a minor incident in the sensations of amazement and grandeur which come from the impressions of the splendor of space walled and domed for all time, and for the world, of St. Peter's itself, which was immense, limited to nothing local, and hospitable to it only to transform it. It was for the world as no Gothic cathedral, as perhaps Thebes's great temples alone were ; yet not for a submissive race, but for submissive races of men. And in effect humanity itself was within its walls, circulating without embarrassment; mute or prayerful or light and joyous as in a pagan festival in honor

of Apollo; a liberating and light joy of movement and quick words of quick delight, and all sounds, — speech and rustling dress and moving feet, and full chorus and music of the laboring organ, making together one swarming sound as of running water or the rustling of dead leaves. The music of the organ and lifted voices of the singers dominated, or died away in the great space of the basilica; so might a band of insects making music in the depths of a forest be heard, while from the deeper depths other sounds of forest winds and running streams might mix in full harmony of palpitating life ascending the vault of heaven, to be lost in infinite space. So at least the double chorus and Gregorian chant of the papal choirs were lifted and lost in the great space of St. Peter's — but lifted above the listening crowd and stately steps of priests and monks and the soft voices of joyous Romans. All this beating of music and ascension of intermittent sound, and stir of people coming or going, or standing in denser mass near the two choirs, helped one to realize the vastness of the place.

And it is vastness; it is not mosaic as in St.

Mark's, or gloom as in Gothic cathedrals, or statues and pictures as in the churches of North Italy ; it is light, space, size, which you realize in St. Peter's. No detail, and the details are colossal, makes any impression upon you. There is no flower or tracery of vine on marble shaft or capital, showing tender love of beauty and memory of nature, as in the lovelier works of religious architecture of the Lombard or Venetian. St. Peter's has no place for tender things of nature. St. Peter's means power of universal worship and grandeur of philosophic thought, and it stands for the impersonal. For St. Peter's is not even limited to St. Peter nor to the sovereign Pontiff himself. And it means civilization not of Italy alone, but of the world. Preacher and Pontiff are less than it. And as the creation of the Italian intellect it is significant of philosophic largeness of mind, for it embraces paganism and Christianity, and unites them without violence. Christ is there. Even Leda is there. Christ is there in a still, small voice of pity and sorrow, dead ; relegated to a side chapel, in Michael Angelo's matchless Pietà, near the door ; Leda in bronze, on the side of one of

the great doors; and Jupiter is there, it is said, in the very antique bronze now called St. Peter. The world is there in act of worship, and the stricken and unstricken conscience alike are covered, housed, and lifted above its own life in St. Peter's. For no personal preoccupations of Rome or Protestant salvation can keep head in the flooding and consoling rush of sensations of worship and helplessness which master mind and heart a brief moment under its mighty dome. Sinner and saint are confounded as creatures alike to be swallowed up in the universal, to become a part of the life which is impersonal and redeeming. And to know something of this you must see St. Peter's, be in it on St. Peter's day, the 29th of June, in Rome.





PERUGIA.

PERUGIA is most proudly placed and most noble in aspect. Her walls and towers are lifted on hills, which, spread out like so many natural bastions, are wooded with oak and olive and mulberry, and fall in many a rift and gully and fold of yellow earth to the level plain.

It is a centre of antiquity where Etruscan, Roman, and Renaissance work is seen in admirable and enduring walls. On Etruscan masonry you see the Roman arch of Augustus, and surmounting this a light *loggia* of the most princely Renaissance. Without and within its gates its life of to-day shows that persistent Umbrian type which has a charm and a character all its own,—the charm of fine features full of peace, and of lithe,

erect form, such as on Etruscan vases and in Perugino's pictures are yet distinct and delightful to us. Climbing its steep and narrow streets, and passing under its narrower arches, the sentiment of history, of art, of time, is immensely gratified. To say you meet the picturesque and the unexpected at every moment is to say what is common to the hill cities of Italy. But Perugia is perhaps richest in impressions of old life and art. For not Orvieto on her isolated rock, not Ancona overlooking the sea, not Spoleto above the plain of Foligno, have so much to show as Perugia, nor so pronounced a character. The bronze griffin on her City Hall — probably an Etruscan bronze, worthy to be compared with the Wolf of the Capitol and the Lion of St. Mark, for expression of fierce animal life; her famous fountain, thirteenth century work; her Italian Gothic City Hall, with its room of the merchants and its room of the money-changers, are things to be seen and not forgotten.

We are in this little carved and painted chamber. It is a place which the merchants had decorated many centuries ago, by the best

men, with inlaid work of rich design and precise form, of dark wood, and with gold, whose yellow lustre, like that of the Doge's Palace at Venice, yet outbraves the dimming touch of time; and no less a master than Perugino was employed to cover the ceiling and wall spaces with graceful and noble figures. Our men "on 'Change" have nothing comparable to this Sala di Cambio, just off the chief street of Perugia, and in this must hold themselves less nobly housed and less happily inspired than the old merchants of Perugia, who, with her bloody lords—Baglioni's and Oddi's—found in art and in religion the final use and expression of their intense life. Not industry but art is the proper final issue and end of wealth. And a city which does not learn to use it in this sense for her enduring glory has no name, or only a base one, not knowing the noblest love of self, which has made the smaller cities of Italy objects of enduring interest, graced and enriched by native talent, like Perugia.

Industry is the necessity of the life of a great people; art is its crown of beauty. And Italy, from the time of Dante to Tasso, had the most

personal expression, the most individual genius, and the most marvellous art. And the way she evoked all this fine part of her nature in the midst of struggle of battle, greed of riches, and lust of pleasure, is remarkable. No rivalry of party struck down art in Italy. The cloisters' walls were places of quiet and refuge; and Giotto painted his immortal frescoes when Guelphs and Ghibelines were cutting each other's throats and sacking each other's houses. Italian art was a thing of cost and pride for those who paid for it,—of intense love and personal genius for those who produced it. Italy paid, in each of the centres of her marvellous life, not for cheap reproduction; she paid for skill; she paid for invention; she paid for expression. The handi-craftsman, the artist, gave her all this, and this holds us in admiration before her to-day. Happily for her, Academical art was not yet born.

Perugia is one of the places where we can learn a better lesson of the use of wealth than even at Rome, which drew the great fifteenth and sixteenth century artists to herself for the most part to corrupt them or disgust them.

Much good is it to us to see what Italy has done for herself and the world, and to what poor uses the modern spirit has put her, in common with cheap and hasty nationalities, unless we learn the lesson of the worth of paying for native talent and the necessity of evoking it; of making it prosperous, as a proof of cultivated sympathies, of exquisite perceptions and of enlightened love of country. The lust of power and greed of money, fierce rivalries of men, in no place at no time raged more desperately than in Perugia. When the young Raphael came hither to study and work in the painting shop of Perugino, it was the last of her great days. She had already formed her character—a proud, rampant hill-city with her trophies on her outer walls from conquered towns, her streets often bloody with the disputes of her own lords; yet out of her intense life came this flower of beauty, Umbrian Art,—an expression of celestial grace and princely breeding.

We look at this day on the pictures of her young men and at the Madonnas of Perugino; they express the most refined and elegant life, all sweetness and peace in its feminine form, all alert

and intense passion of being in her fifteenth-century gallants as they may be seen in the charming little tempera pictures attributed to Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and to the more learned and accomplished hand of Pinturichio, the fellow worker with Raphael in Perugia. And these half dozen pictures should be not less celebrated than Carpaccio's at Venice. They are fifteenth-century gallants with long hair and fine legs and beautiful costumes, who pose or dance, or play on the mandoline, or carry the hooded hawk; they are in fact the bright ancestors of well-favored descendants. Good art is born out of tradition and perfected by example. The greater the genius, the more roots it has shot into the soil of the past. A great man makes all antiquity tributary to him. Raphael appropriates not only his master's teaching and example, but employs the best traditions of his master's predecessors. To appreciate this we must see the earlier outcome of the Umbrian school in the unique gallery at Perugia.

When the fortunate young Raphael came to Perugia, Umbrian art had already reached its distinct character of refined ideality and purity. The

very types of the Madonna, the very arrangement of figures, the formula, so to speak, of the marriage and coronation of the Virgin which Perugino perfected, had been found by the earlier masters of the Umbrian school.

The divine Raphael was not to astonish the world by his originality, but by the varied power and consummate beauty of his treatment and expression of traditional subjects and types, a master in the kingdom of form. But Raphael's art was never more delightful than when, fresh from the nimble air of its Umbrian home, it kept its virgin charm and modest grace this side of the ostentation of knowledge.

But to leave this interesting question of the dominance of the Umbrian ideal in Raphael's work and its final extinction in the Vatican, see with me Umbrian life carried on to-day as of old, over olive gray slopes. The very peasants winnow grain in the most primitive manner, throwing shovelfuls against the wind which carries away the chaff; and this laborious but picturesque mode — one man to throw, another man to heap the grain, and a small boy to have his

hand in the work—is certainly as old as Etruria itself.

Mephisto had nothing to say, but lent himself to pure enjoyment looking at this harvesting scene in Italy; the sharp-leaved olives against a windy summer sky, white oxen drawing a low, red-wheeled cart of the most simple form, in fact Etruscan, loaded with grain and beautiful to look at; wealth of color to the eye of an artist, and riches to the peasant. The peasant's wife brought out the sunniest wine, and poured us a generous glass, which she pressed us to take. What should one do but enjoy this old and picturesque bit of the life of the man of the fields, and share for the moment his happiness? And what a picture! Virgil saw nothing better. The golden harvest, the golden wine; sun-browned, straight-limbed, smiling Umbrian peasants, rejoicing in the bounty of the soil; the whole seen against a sky full of light above a fruitful plain.

The sun was setting behind Perugia. Assisi, a white gem on the gray and rose-colored slopes of Subasso, afar off above the Tiber; the mountains of Gubbio to the north; the whole landscape

was as it were enshied in impalpable tints ; the air was most delicate. This Umbrian landscape is perhaps only to be rendered by studied and exquisite work. It is not a question of rich effect, of fulness and boldness of brushwork like a picture by Constable ; but it suggests the Raphael-esque pencil of a lover of subtle gradations, of nice accent, of pure lines, of delicate drawing. Understood in any other way the Umbrian landscape is not expressed, and its peculiar beauty is lost. It does not lend itself to Titianesque treatment of massy foliage, of sonorous color, of grand lines. It is pale, precious, delicate, all blonde and rose and silvery ; the distance melts in a limpid sky, and makes the faintest impression of remote form ; the middle ground touched in level lines of processional trees in a teeming valley ; the nearer hills gray with olives twisted in shapes of pain, or dark-leaved with oaks sturdy and effective enough, giants above the monotonous mulberries and vines ; a landscape to be taken in bits ; in a word, a landscape not for scenic impression but for study, and as such it has been well understood by Griswold.

The sky above answers to the dramatic senti-

ment of movement of profound expression; its changes, like the sea, correspond with the quick spirit of a man touched with the sentiment of his personal fortunes, darkened with wrath of injury or splendid with pride of triumph.

Mephisto in saturnine quiet walked his way over the Umbrian fields in paths shaded by thick-leaved mulberries. The evening was full of peculiar beauty, and let us see the source of the Umbrian ideal. The rising moon, large, rose-faced, loomed through the pallid atmosphere. As I went with Professor Costa, the Italian painter who has best rendered the exquisite beauty of the Umbrian landscape, late returning harvesters came singing up the road, and white oxen, the very breed celebrated by Virgil, mild-eyed like the lotos-eaters, deepened my sense of the unparalleled plentitude of this marvellous land of Italy, better seen in summer than in winter, and best seen in spring and in autumn. Peasants came singing, arms stretched over each other's shoulders, man and maid, singing words, celebrating beauty, not sadness. No sound of lament springs in choric song from the harvest fields of Italy. Her songs

are always songs of pleasure or of love, and the restful quiet of evening in the fields is broken by songs about wine and women, too rank and natural, however, for Anglo-Saxon ears. The only sad thing in Italy is the landscape, and that is inexpressibly melancholy. From the homeless spaces of the Roman Campagna to the ghastly Apennines and the waterless russet hills of Umbria nature is sad, its beauty is impersonal and not to be grasped, and it has nothing familiar. It lacks the charm of English lanes, and of the cool, green, river scenery of France. Convent walls, church towers, arched ways, plaintive bells of evening have no suggestion of home ; they express renunciation and solitude. And this is the setting of Perugia.

Perugia itself, a dark mass piled against the luminous sky, looked ominously black.

We went in her dark streets and under her darker archways to meet the wavering lights of a hundred candles flaming and sputtering in the night wind, carried by lugubrious monks and priests coming down the steep way of the city to bury the dead. The dead are buried only at night at Perugia, — an old mediæval custom.

The older palaces in Perugia were built with a small door by the side of the great door, called the door of the dead,— a door opened only to let out the corpse. There is something immensely impressive in this. It was designed to touch the imagination, and remains a proof of the temper of the mediæval spirit which sought to deepen the terror of death. Mephisto says that we have lost all need of picturesque experience and dramatic effect in real life. Perugia is yet full of both, affording the contrast of cave-like gloom and catacomb narrowness of arched passages with the spacious outlook of a mountain city ; and on a summer night overlooking the Umbrian valley from the heights of her ramparts is comparable to looking over the sea. The far-stretching plain, the dim outline of the remote hills, the limpid air, form one of the finest scenes of the world,— wide space of restful earth and wider space of sky, against which the black square tower of the lower city smites with startling effect in the diffused and melting radiance of an Italian moonlight.



ASSISI.

O see Assisi is to get something of the sentiment of the Holy Land. It is delightful in color, ochreous red and gray, built of a hard flinty stone, which offers endless resistance to time and weather. Most of its walls are as old as the Crusades. Its crenellated towers and the pointed arches of its gateways are very much as they were when first built by the lords who came back from Syria and Palestine. It is, in fact, one of the few places in Italy likely to remain unchanged, for it is but a shrine, and has no interest outside of art and religion.

Its name stirs the imagination and begets a certain ardor of mind; for it has the potency of a place of old renown and tender sentiment, and its world-famous church and frescoes draw us to

St. Francis and Giotto, two of the most fervent and delicate personalities of the Italy of Dante. At Assisi one must stop to think of them, for there they are more than names.

The chief profit of travel is this fact, that it invests great names with the body of life, and quickens us like a personal influence. We realize the actuality of a great being and a great work when we confront the very expression of the one or the fact of the other. It shows us the resurrection of the illustrious dead. If in any place they can kindle anew a spark of living interest and appear transfigured, it is in places consecrated by their life and death.

The glow of enthusiasm which is so delightful and spontaneous is generated at sight of Assisi,— a place of picturesque quiet where great genius and great sweetness have lodged immortal works. One may call it the birthplace both of Italian art and Italian democracy. Piety of soul, love of universal life, sentiment of nature and of humanity, were incarnate, creative, magnetic, plastic in the monk of Assisi. Matthew Arnold's ideal of sweetness and light was realized in the monk

and painter of the thirteenth century. The double pilgrimage which yet honors both is more interesting than that which seeks Rome and loses itself in the cold wilderness of the Vatican. The expression of Latin Christianity in the monk of Assisi is close to our modern ideas of equality and humanity, for it was the renewal of the Syrian gospel of poverty and pity, of love and renunciation ; and in St. Francis it was the result of profound sympathy and measureless sensibility of nature.

One recollects that Emerson preached the doctrine of St. Francis, that we should love poverty like a bride. One recollects that Thoreau was his truest disciple. To say the least, Assisi holds a more considerable illustration of the doctrine of renunciation than is apparently probable in our societies, and it is worth while to consider it. The religious constructions at Assisi are most imposing. They who wished to honor St. Francis spared nothing of expense for the illustration of their most cherished ideas in giving to Assisi her double church and crypt and convent, decorated by Cimabue, Giotto, and Simon Memmi. The rich and beauti-

ful genius of Italy has nothing more tender and attractive to our sentiment of the human and the ideal than Assisi offers in these frescoes and the life and work of St. Francis.

It is less within my province to speak of the last, involving as it does the whole scheme of existence, and some contradiction of the ruling forces of our modern life. Yet it is indisputably truly representative of the Christianity of Christ. The papal inheritor of imperial Rome seems like a blazoned and monstrous imposition when seen next to the poet-monk of Assisi. A triple tiara blazing with jewels, the pomp of ceremony and impurpled prelates raise, to say the least, some questioning when seen in company with peasants who can earn but thirty cents a day in a land teeming with wealth. Both political economy and organized religion must one day answer this fact and dispose of this injustice.

Let me go to the more attractive consideration of a few fadeless frescoes at Assisi, which, even among the sheltered places of Italy, seems most remote and aside from its general life; a place apart, where about the colossal foundations and

beautiful constructions of a great and fecund time of belief and art a poor and unattractive population stagnates, or rusts and begs and sleeps, and for the most part is without comeliness. It is but a few hours from Perugia, yet its people have nothing of the Umbrian beauty of the nobler town. Why is it that in all these places of historic faith and ecclesiastical ascendancy the people are ugly, malformed, ignorant, repulsive, poor, and unawakened ? The ideas and the activities which made the fame of these very places and created religious bodies were healthful and disseminating and not contracting to the energies of life. They have these many centuries ceased to animate the religious orders. Privilege, routine, and self-indulgence, paralysing causes, have taken the place of vital inspirations ; and these bodies now exist, supported by foreign aids from devout people who think more of the priest and the monk than of the peasant or the people. We are so slow to admit the fact of the transmission of virtue from old institutions to new instrumentalities ! When priests and monks were the organs of a vital public life, and of public opinion in a measure, and served to

establish the equilibrium of social forces, they humanized the strong, protected the weak, and initiated the ignorant to the highest hopes and the most beautiful life. Now this is the function of literature or the press. In Italy the priest and the monk are no more than automatons and religious orders so much picturesque ruin. What of tenacity and force yet holds them together is self-interest and love of power, not love of goodness, unless good means something to eat, — which was, I believe, Macaulay's idea of good.

The number of monks at the vast convent of Assisi is now reduced to fifteen or twenty. The Italian government has put the convent to laical uses, and the few monks that remain serve only for the services of the church.

The enlightened lover of a sound social life can scarcely regret this partial suppression of a religious establishment which no longer serves as an ideal or in any way improves the condition of the population of Assisi itself. Assisi needs no more monks. Let stand the monuments of old faith, the great walls of St. Francis. Go to the old town as a pilgrim to a shrine. Refresh your soul with its

an ideal of tender fellowship with all breathing life, with its great example of renunciation and saving love, with its painted types of purity, its expression of beauty,—beauty of color in richest vestments, in tapestries, beauty of form, and impressive disposition of spaces in the vaulted gloom of its beautiful church, and where you see so much of the shape and expression of an extinct life and faith. Look at this delicate and lovely flower of Christian art, the dignity and sweetness of soul it implies, the exquisite feminine sentiment of it. Let it give you all it has to give, but do not confound that with the actual which mechanically performs its functions within its walls. Ages lie between it and the automatic life which yet has its place there.

Look to these old frescoes, to these dim vaulted arches, to stained glass, to figured walls, as to the consecration of wealth to art for the illustration of vital ideas. Ask yourself what inspiration of country or religion, with us, what personal doctrine of unashamed and voluntary poverty and personal renunciation, will ever enrich an American town with such a precious record and expression of itself

— such a sign of being, as breasts and breaks the slopes of Mount Subassio ?

The convent is built on colossal arches, its grand gallery overlooks a country of marvellous fertility and beauty, and the missal-like walls of the lower church gleam with gold, and the most elaborate patterns in borderwork or backgrounds of the early pictures. What walls they are, to be sure ! So rich with figures of saints and martyrs, and sacred personages of the Bible, and where the beaked face of Dante, and the divine-looking Virgin and Child by Giotto, in blue robe, against a gold ground, appear, the silent objects of centuries of admiration and awe. It is great, it is moving. And we step under the blue, dimly-lighted vaults of the lower church, feeling the sanctity of time and religion in this great place of pilgrimage. Old tapestries are opulently spread over the backs and seats of the choir benches. A procession starts from the sacristy, moving with measured step to take its place in front of the high altar. Cross, banner, baldichino, candles, gorgeous robes, lifted voices — all the majesty and material of an imposing worship. I studied well the faces of these priests and monks :

strong, placid, sensual or ascetic faces — the faces of rulers, full of authority. How interesting ! And the glance of a priest ! so furtive and searching, but always so brilliant in Italy. And what vigor of ruddy animal life in these monks — faces of well-fed men — full of force ; certainly they represented the survival of the strongest. Splendidly robed, they in fact illustrate the sensual and artistic exigencies of the rich Italian nature, which by art, and in the name of religion, furnishes so superb spectacles, and celebrates so magnificently the traditions of her life. These monks with faces like Roman emperors were living illustrations of the coin-cut profiles of old Rome. Every trait is large, sculpturesque ; no line of mean care or small distress disfigures them. They have been moulded in tranquillity and are full of repose. The monk's face differs from the priest's. It is more sensual and less worldly — it has more humor and less of ambition in it.

Gold robed, in lace and silk, admirably grouped, priests and acolytes took their place. Then burst the music, orchestral and vocal ; the organ throbbed in crescendoes of sound, and fell to plaintive, dying

notes — a sound making a kind of invisible flood to sweep over and submerge the senses and the soul, while puffs of the blue smoke of incense floated in the dim light. Witnessing this, old men and women, beggars, emaciated, diseased, abject creatures, and with this group in the vast spaces of the church a few persons of better condition. True it was a *functione*, in the afternoon; but whether witnessed by crowds, as it is in the morning, or by the few fragments, pieces and shreds of humanity then present, the contrast remains much the same between the splendor of religion in Italy and the poverty of the people — between the strong-faced priests and the starved-looking and enfeebled and patient witnesses of all these costly and magnificent instrumentalities for their salvation, not in this world but the next. Mephisto was never more sardonic over human submissiveness than when he looked at all this.

The condition of misery and madness of the lower classes in Italy makes the costly luxuries of its government and religion seem monstrous and unrighteous to an American. No adequate change can take place in either short of a great revolution

—a convulsion in fact — too destructive to both to be thought of without dread. Few allow themselves to look beyond immediate facts, and we take life as it comes. But the alarming increase of suicides in the Italian army, the increase of madness from inadequate nourishment and improper food, are sinister facts, and not to see to what they may lead is to be hard and unimaginative and brutal.

At Assisi, worship is magnificent, artistic, poetic, but it seems now pitiless in a population whose condition it does not improve—and it seems not in the least representative of the sentiment of humanity, equality, of all that charm of personal tenderness which is the glory of the name of St. Francis. The old place of pilgrimage is full of picturesque interest. The great windows of the older palaces are for the most part built up with stone, the form and sculptured ornament are all that remains of grace, of beauty and expression of wealth about the shrunken life of Assisi. Fallen as it is, the two great personalities of Giotto and St. Francis will seem close to you.

To say the briefest word about Giotto — a genius

only little less extraordinary than Dante, the significance of his art is for the élite only, for it touches no coarse sympathies and is unintelligible in carnal and theatrical schools of art. It is very great in many respects, and holds the whole future of Italian art, and for pathetic expression and dramatic sincerity has never been surpassed. Understanding it in the least, you will recognize that, resist and postpone as we may, American art is yet to take the step from French painting to Italian art, precisely as the best French and English talent goes to it to correct and ennable its expression. Seeing Giotto's works, we are made acquainted with the high temper and pure taste which make Italian art at the best times a supreme influence in the highest culture. Giotto, like the early poets, like the songs of dawn, has the charm of sweetness and purity. It would be futile to describe what must be seen to be enjoyed. Go to Assisi; it is one of the springs of Italian culture and Italian humanity. The monk and the painter are charming and interesting, and the double shrine is worthy of the most passionate pilgrimage.



MAJOLICA IN ITALY.

ESARO is a little old town on the Adriatic; its walls overlook the blue sea, and fig trees grow within a short distance of breaking waves on a delightful beach. Two high promontories, a few miles apart, rise north and south of the town, and between them is a garden-like country, and a little river which pours itself under an old Roman bridge and here reaches the sea. Ten minutes' walk from the broken walls of the town gate takes you to "foaming lines of creamy spray," and you enjoy an unfailing pleasure — the long, restful level of the horizon, and the quick-coming waves of the sea. From the nearer cliff, south of the town, you look back to the pale Apennines. Up there, hidden away by the nearer hills, is the birthplace of Raphael, and still

further is Gubbio, famous for its Gubbio ware and its great painter of majolica, Maestro Giorgio. Back there, out of sight, is Castle Durante, likewise remarkable for its majolica. From the margin of the sea to the naked slopes of the Apennines is found the fine and famous clay of Pesaro, with which its majolica was made. Venice imported this clay for her "*Venus pursegayne*." The most flourishing period of majolica painting in Pesaro was four hundred years ago, when the Duke of Urbino, who himself occasionally painted majolica, "invited Battista Franco, a Venetian painter renowned for the correctness of his drawings, and commissioned him to make designs for vases and plates, and bought at high prices all the drawings of Raphael he could procure, which, with engravings of Marc Antonio, he gave to his majolica painters." Pesaro and Loretto are now the two places in Italy which have unrivalled collections of majolica, and this one of Pesaro is perhaps surpassed by none. Half a million francs was refused by the municipality of Pesaro, only the other day, for this collection, which is rightly valued as the peculiar and appropriate glory of

the town, which is also the birthplace of Rossini, who probably cared more for a plate of macaroni than for all the plates of majolica of Italy.

The taste and passion for antique majolica can only be gratified by princes and millionnaires and a few lucky seekers in Italy. Once in the hands of antiquarians, rare majolica plates or vases cost as much as plates of gold and silver. And in fact, although the taste for Italian majolica is comparatively modern, since its flourishing production in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Queen of Sweden is said to have offered for the famous Loretto vases their weight in gold.

The collection at Pesaro is richest in plates. The walls of two rooms in the town hall are covered with this beautiful pottery. They are a new revelation of an old art, and like everything that is best in art in Italy, take one back either to the thirteenth, fourteenth or the fifteenth century. And what a revelation of taste and invention, of caprice, of delight in color, are these lustrous objects, iridescent like mother of pearl, white like shells, or blue like lapis lazuli, ruby red and gold, on which the most clever artists have traced with

a sure and light hand arabesques, painted portraits or mythological and sacred subjects, coats of arms, and borders and patterns of wild and curious fancy, and of a cultivated taste ; plates for brides, for baptisms, for births ; a whole art close to the real life of old Italy, adapted to the great life of princes and lords at the most flourishing periods of Italian civilization.

No wonder the Rothschilds of to-day pay enormous sums for majolica, and fill the *caissons* of their ceilings with Maestro Giorgio plates when they can get them. Silver is a vulgar luxury compared with the splendid rarity of the artistic work of the Pavian gentleman, Maestro Giorgio, who painted his plates of immortal fame and great price in Gubbio four centuries ago.

Much has been written about majolica. Maryatt's book is perhaps the best known. He is chiefly indebted to an old Italian author of the eighteenth century, who first directed attention to the lost art, and first revived a taste for it, by his studies in this very old Pesaro. Passeri's work has been translated into French by Delange,— Paris, 1863, — and is doubtless known to many of my readers

interested in majolica. In Italy it has been supplemented by more comprehensive works concerning all the places which produced majolica—Italian studies which leave little to be said or discovered. It is a story of great interest of the varied production of an artistic industry raised to the level of art by the personal genius of some of the great majolica painters of the fifteenth century. Not only Urbino and Gubbio and Faenza and Pesaro, though these oftenest have the precedence because of the fine surface and high art of their majolica, but Ferrara, Mantua, Modena, Reggio, Rovigo, Pisa, Parma, Fano, Forli, Spello, Deruta, Genoa, Venice, Treviso, Milan, and Florence, produced this famous crockery, stamped with a style of color and decoration peculiar to each place. But this region from Pesaro to Gubbio and Faenza holds places which led all the other Italian towns in the production of beautiful majolica, stimulated as they were by the personal taste of cultivated princes, like the lords of Pesaro and the Dukes of Urbino, and the Duke of Ferrara. Marvellous Italy! The clay of her river banks furnishes the unique material of this her

art wherein she rivals Persia and Japan. In fact Venice set herself to rival the oriental porcelain. Marco Polo brought back the first accounts of it, and Pisan and Venetian captains and pilgrims brought back the first specimens. Moorish plates, or Hispano-Arabic plates, were the first models of the Italian majolica makers. Later, Chinese and Persian porcelains supplanted the native productions of Italy, which in the eighteenth century had become nothing more than a work of industry. Passeri deplored the substitution of the oriental porcelain, which, if more vivid in color, was poorer in design and less instructive and amusing than the Raphaelesque designs and "consummate eruditio[n]" of the decorated Italian majolica.

In fact the tradition that Raphael himself painted majolica for the Duke of Urbino has served to make the Raphaelesque plates objects of covetous search. This name has perhaps given a wider fame to Italian majolica than the great name of Lucca della Robbia, or even Maestro Giorgio's. The plates of Pesaro and Urbino are full of Raphaelesque designs and subjects. There was a celebrated painter of the name of Raffaello

Ciarla in the sixteenth century. His name as a painter of majolica, and the known fact that many of Raphael's designs decorated the plates of Urbino, was sufficient to confirm the tradition that Raphael had painted majolica for the Duke of Urbino or the lords of Pesaro.

There is some reason to believe that no less a hand than Titian's was employed by the Duke of Ferrara to make designs for a service of majolica. There exists a correspondence between the Duke of Ferrara and his Venetian ambassador in which the latter says: "I was with Titian and saw the vase which he ordered as a specimen for you. Three months are required to fill the order, and each vase will cost *cinque marselli*," — about three francs and a half. If Titian did not make the designs for the vases ordered by his august host, friend and patron, Duke Alphonzo, he at least did not disdain to supervise the design and execution of them. He made designs for tapestry, and none of the great artists of his time disdained decorative work. Dosso Dossi, who so closely rivalled Titian in his color, made designs for the vases of the pharmacy of the Castle of Ferrara. I have myself

seen two plaques which have all the characteristics of Sansovino's work. But without going to Venice, here at Pesaro are the plates and vases painted by consummate artists,— by Maestro Giorgio, by Battista Franco, by Orazio Fontana, by Francesco Xantho, and others whose names are more or less known.

And what an array of interesting and beautiful objects. Portrait plates, representing fair ladies and great lords, plates with cupids used at dances to hold sweets for partners, and plates given as valentines are given, as tribute to beauty and avowal of admiration,— plates with verses of long-forgotten madrigals of long dead *trouverés* or simple words of love. Look at them! Fragile as they are, they have out-lasting the precious living beauty they were made to celebrate. Truly, the only immortal thing is art, and human dust or breathing clay goes to the cold dishonor of death, while the artist's work confers endless duration on the clay from the river's bank, and shaped and hardened and colored, full of the excellence of cunning fancy and bright form. In the country of majolica, so much of its proud old life is given

back to us in this collection of plates; beauty of fair women and glory of great lords, of fine taste and intense being. And for the most part, how pagan they all are! It is a colored page of mythology, of fair shapes of the old gods and goddesses, bacchanals of flesh, and the most human stories of the old Bible. These are the subjects which amused or charmed the famous *cinque cento* artists and their patrons. And in fact it is not too much to say that the old Italian majolica served in some sort as an illustrated book or journal; it propagated the myths, the fictions, the symbols, the incidents and figures most interesting to the awakened classes, and transmitted and popularized the ideas of the humanists, the scholars of the Renaissance, and the revered images of a triumphant religion. Does not Passeri make it the especial superiority of majolica over oriental porcelain that it illustrates a "consummate erudition?" It in fact implied a whole literature, and a delicate life full of the natural forces which enrich it and quicken it.

It will doubtless interest many of my readers to know that the honor of the re-discovery of the

art of Maestro Giorgio is due to Pesaro, and that it is practised to-day with the most praiseworthy results in the little old town by the sea. I believe the Universal Exhibition at Philadelphia introduced majolica to Americans. The art languished in Italy, and was in fact lost at Pesaro for three centuries. It was retaken in the eighteenth century, but not until 1848 was the secret of the famous gold, iridescent varnish of Maestro Giorgio found.

It was discovered by Pietro Gaj, of Pesaro, eight years before it was officially announced by the Minister of Commerce and Fine Arts in Italy as the discovery of a young man of Gubbio, Luigi Carocci, who "after indefatigable studies succeeded in reproducing the shot metallic or iridescent plates in imitation of Maestro Giorgio." Pesaro has made good her claim to priority in this discovery; and the secret of this iridescent gold varnish was sold by Peter Gaj to the famous English manufacturer Wedgwood for £50. On Gaj's death, in 1867, the secret was stolen from his family in Italy and sold in Rome, and from Rome it passed to other places and is now widely

known. Since 1867 it has won great honor for Pesaro. The son of Pietro Gaj, and a certain Tito Majorine, have made some of the most remarkable imitations of the *cinque cento* plates, and since several fabrics of majolica — one under the special patronage of the Syndic of Pesaro, Count Mattei, Senator of Italy, and the Pesarese painter, Professor Genero, who has also, I believe, opened a school of instruction in majolica painting — have won distinction for Pesaro in all the more recent National and Universal Exhibitions.

It was demonstrated and recognized at the Paris Exhibition of 1878 that Pesaro had succeeded in reproducing the artistic *faienze* of 1500, and excelled all other Italian productions of this kind. Antiquarians sell (or allow to be sold) these imitations for originals, and as old or new they are costly enough. But it is not difficult to detect the imitation. A sufficient proof to a practised eye is in the quality of the color and precision of drawing, although the copies are often traced from the originals. The modern plates and vases have not the quality of color nor the masterly precision of stroke in drawing of the old plates, which have

neither crudity, nor harshness, nor feebleness. If they are bad they are boldly bad—not bad because of weakness and lack of science, but bad because of bad taste.

The modern majolica of Pesaro surprised the Parisians, because it illustrated so many new patterns; and it chiefly owes its excellence, apart from the quality of the clay of Pesaro, to the fact that it is copied from the little known but magnificent collection which now belongs to the town, bequeathed to it by Cavaliere Muzza. The whole collection (more than three hundred pieces) is said to have been copied by the majolica painters of Pesaro, and adorns the palace of Prince Albani-Letti in Milan.

There exists an old sixteenth-century treatise on the art of making vases of majolica, (the word was not then applied to this ware) written and illustrated by a majolica painter of the time, Cipriano Piccolpasso, of Castle Durante. It has recently been republished from a rare copy of the work in possession of Count Mattei. It treats of all the old methods, the kind of clay, when and how it is to be collected, the composition of the

various colors to be used, the form of brushes and the construction of the furnace.

The clay for the fine majolica is deposited by the rivers of the country of majolica—the Metuaro, the Foglio, the Isauro—and it is usually gathered in the rain, or after the great storms which wash down the naked soil of the Apennines to the river beds. A most amusing and quaint old print accompanies Piccolpasso's treatise, and represents a hill-country, with towers and castles and a rapid river-bed under a pouring rain; the banks in layers of mud like the banks of the Nile, in cube-like deposits of fine soil, and a clay-digger loading a donkey. Another picture represents a high-set, castellated town, under a great-faced sun which fills up the whole sky—a graphic expression of his sweltering majesty baking the clay. Naked clay-diggers toil on the river's bank.

When the rain falls upon the Apennines and swells the rivers with a turbid flood, the lighter part of the washings of the hills settles at the sides of the river, and is left one or two feet high; it is a soft red and gray clay. It is so fine and soft that it suggests manipulation, and invites the

plastic hand. Covering this clay, when moulded, with a white and vitrifiable composition, we have the various majolicas of Italy — either made from the finer clay of the rivers, or dug out of clay deposits; and Pesaro produces the colors which adorn her majolica. A majolica painter of Pesaro informed me that he relied chiefly upon the colors of Pesaro, as neither German nor French colors equalled in quality and brilliancy those of Pesaro. In every sense the majolica of Italy is wholly indigenous to it.

Nothing is now lacking to Italy for the most brilliant success in this revived art but personal talents and taste, and the employment of artists for the decorative part of her majolica.

It were too much to expect another Lucca della Robbia and a Maestro Giorgio, or a Fontana. Precious things are not repeated, they are only imitated. But if great genius in art is the spring of our best interest in and love for it, the ways of our life may be refreshed and graced by the streams which the springs of genius have fed. And it is our business as part of the moral body of our time — part of the artistic life of our

time — to raise the character of our industries and improve and enrich the expression of the arts of life.

The least acquaintance with Maestro Giorgio's work will show us how marvellous a thing of beauty in color may be made out of the clay of the river's bed — a thing lustrous and strange, and delightful to look at — ruby red, or gold, iridescent like the petal of an iris, gleaming and changing like mother of pearl. These plates flash back gold and ruby red like fire; they are incarnadined like blood; crimson and gold, like the burnished effects of water under sunset and dawn — really marvellous objects of color and design, and some of them — the oldest, before Maestro Giorgio's — are of the most delicate patterns and sober color; art in every way chaste and elegant, comparable to the fine leaf and flower patterns of the Hispano and Arabic ware.

The plates that form the collection at Pesaro are differently precious, and obviously more precious than the sacred cups made from the dust shaken from the robe of the Virgin, or scraped from the walls of her shrine at Loretto. The religion of

beauty gives another sanctity to life than that of suffering. It evokes all the forces of our being, and does not flourish upon the suppression of any of them. It has its tribute for all religions and all superstitions, but is itself the ultimate and comprehensive worship, which a sound and enlightened man may enjoy when all the old gods are dead and all the old creeds lifeless. The worship of beauty in art leads to a true walk in the paths of righteousness and peace; it leads us from one admiration to another; to whatever can stir the soul or move the senses, yet always taking us to higher planes of life.

Indulge me in this little sermon, appropriate to an artist, fresh from the most beautiful things. Featureless old Pesaro, poor and fallen from her great days, is redeemed, is made interesting by her position by the sea and by her old art industry. She has her place in civilization, interesting to us in New York, or Paris, or London, because she has made a beautiful thing — because she has given a beautiful thing to the world. She lies between the sunset and the sea, her old ramparts delightfully close to the water. The

white sand and golden wheat and pale yellow sea-thistles and sea gardens of fruit and thin pasture fields where gray cattle feed make a lovely picture.

The aspect of her streets is, strange enough, uninteresting. Her population is not attractive. Her buildings, with a few exceptions, date from a poor epoch, are of undressed brick, and look unfinished. The *goitre* is common, and many of her inhabitants are diseased-looking, halt, blind in one eye, and scrofulous; the common character of the people of what were once the ecclesiastical states, refuse of ignorance, superstition, clandestine immorality, and stagnant life. The princes of the church have done nothing of good for Italy since the sixteenth century. The Jesuits spoilt its art. Longest under church rule, Pesaro has been most stagnant, and has the least to show of an awakened life — in public taste, in fine streets, in noble architecture, in a clean and sound people. But, thanks to some of her superior citizens, she has her unrivalled collection of majolica.

"We are a few old men," said one of them to me, *apropos* of the recent offer of half a million of

francs to the municipality for the collection of majolica — “a few old men ; but so long as we live the collection shall never be sold. After us, what will happen ? Who knows ?”





BELLINI AND PESARO.

ALTHOUGH Pesaro is charmingly situated and is of great antiquity, and was once a place of princely residence, nothing remains of architectural interest in it but the Gothic portals of its brick churches and the noble palace of the Duke of Urbino, now quite transformed for modern uses and holding a superb hall, and a little room — which I saw by special permission — the chapel of Lucrezia Borgia — the ceiling of which is yet a thing of Raphaelesque beauty. But Pesaro has perhaps the most interesting Bellinis in the world and does not know their priceless worth. In the Church of St. Francesco, the *predella* of the altar-piece contains six little pictures, which give one a new idea of Bellini's genius and in which he is at the top of

achievement in the same field with Giorgione and Titian.

In front of these rare pictures, and completely hiding four of them, were the artificial flowers and candlesticks of the modern rubric of Romanism ; and these covered the fine and unequalled work of one of the greatest men of Italy. Not only were these pictures hidden by artificial flowers in gilt vases, they were also covered with cobwebs ; fine, thick, marvellous and most ancient cobwebs — church cobwebs. In some remote time these pictures had been sufficiently valued to get what is unusual in Italy — the protection of a covering of glass, set in black frames, and screwed down. Many generations of spiders had woven a grey curtain between the glass and the fine color of the grand old Venetian painter. Short of an application to the Syndic or Mayor of Pesaro, these venerated cobwebs could not be removed. I was constrained for the time being to limit my enjoyment and study to the pictures which were the most visible.

O, Italy ! O, Church of Rome ! Into what night of darkness has sunk that fine need of and

care for beautiful things which has made your name immortal ? And how can the Church boast of Italian art, or rather of her relationship to it, when her guardianship of its master-pieces is so commonly accompanied with an altar-array of the work of Munich, or Milanese industry of unspeakable tinsel, wax and paper flowers, and wooden figures, which she places between the worshipper and the pictures of Bellini, of Titian and Tintoret, or sets in garish order about the sacred *ostensorio* ?

Ignorance and insensibility can go no further in their neglect of or indifference to precious things than to shut from active service the work of a Bellini, while it places a chromo-lithograph on the altar in front of it. And this is not infrequent in the churches of Italy.

And what are these Bellini's which seem to have been unvisited and uncared for these many years in old Pesaro ? They are little pictures in which you shall see that grand old Bellini had taken a hint from his younger rivals—from the new men, Giorgione and Titian—and treated in the most dramatic way, and with his customary

dignity, the most interesting subjects; excelling Carpaccio's famous St. George, and equalling Giorgione and Titian in his most charming landscape backgrounds.

The centre picture of the *predella* shows us the Holy Family. The Virgin kneels before the swaddled infant, and such is the charm of her expression, of tender adoration, of purity and repose, that I will say neither Perugino nor Raphael has ever felt and expressed the spirit of the subject with a more personal and winning beauty. The entire set of pictures have the most interesting landscape backgrounds. We must surrender the often repeated claim that the sentiment of landscape is mostly modern. Cima da Conegliano and all the Venetians had and illustrated it in the most loving spirit. And Bellini, of whom we think as the painter of enthroned madonnas, not completely liberated from the formality of his more rigid predecessors, is here revealed as a painter of dramatic legend, gifted not only with the sentiment of tender and peaceful things, but gifted with that sentiment of heroic passion and romantic nature which is the great distinction of Giorgione.

The great altar-piece above the pictures of which I speak is now dirty and dark, but obviously a most noble work, such as Bellini often painted. The little pictures beneath are more personal, less conventional and closer to our sense of nature and our love of legend, with their backgrounds of river and cattle, of dark towers and brown trees against the sky ; of just such a country as you may see about Pesaro—a shining river, gates and towers of an antique town, and quiet spaces of silvery sky.

It is worth while to ask what these pictures meant to the fifteenth century Italians. Their fondness for the heroes of their old legends, their delight in pictures of the martyrs and saints of the church at a time when the Italian mind was most alive, meant something very different from that which is implied in the debased art, and mindless treatment of them as church-furniture for the last three hundred years in Italy, where they are now significant only like so much stage-property. They were to the old painters and to the Italian mind in its best time ideals : the ideal of youthful heroism in St. George, the most beau-

tiful type of heroic endeavor and victory; the ideal of old age withdrawn from active life, and in solitude given to study and contemplation in St. Jerome. Bellini's St. George, like Carpaccio's, is no fiction, but a beautiful young man with long, fair, flowing hair, clad in black and gold, mounted on a powerful white horse. His young face is pale and worn with the stress of desperate battle. His broken lance lies on the ground, its steel head deep in the breast of the dragon, who lifts himself in a last endeavor on the slime of the river bank. The horse rears his broad chest and carries lightly his rider, who bends forward and, with a gesture, seems to ward off once more the expected attack of the mortally wounded beast. All this is set before us with the quiet energy of conviction.

The material expression of our mind represents its ideal, or the want of it. The young Venetian's was found in these figures of the old painters. Where is our own? What type, in book or picture, serves as the expression of what is most attractive and worthy of emulation to the young American? What novel or poem sets before us

the image or the model of our best conception of active or imaginative life? It is doubtful if we have formulated or embodied either, and for the most part we are skeptical of their utility — so much so that the old Italian ideals, on first impressions, seem merely like the transformation material of theatres, or the stuff of fairy tales, and in every way infantile, if not worse. I think that we are greatly mistaken in such conclusions.

Do not think I am retrograde or old-fashioned in holding your attention to this very old religious art. In truth, when properly felt and understood, it has much to give us. It is an art which is full of meaning, personal, yet wide in interest, ranking with the best literature as the expression of mind, of genius, of sentiment, of life, not limited to the mere question of picture-making, nor coming before us as a fashionable work of great cost; in a word it is noble, eliciting the most disinterested admiration, the enduring witness of a fine mind and a rare nature. There is a humility, a modesty, a patience of spirit allied with great perfection of work in Bellini's art which is very remarkable. There are some depths he did not reach, there are some storms

which were unknown to him—known and sounded by the more agitated and solemn genius of the later Tintoret. But what an extraordinary man was old Bellini, painting his most beautiful and unsurpassed work, his *Madonna of the Frari*, at Venice, when he was more than eighty years old! Sound and unblemished in color, clear and vivid, it remains to this day, and second to no picture in the world. “Old age hath yet its honor and its toil,” when it is capable of such virility and such sweetness.

I reluctantly leave these pictures of Bellini. I should like to set them before you, cobwebs and all. I am sure you would admit you had never seen anything more interesting and remarkable in Venetian art. They in fact show us that within the compass of Bellini’s own life and work—a long life and a great work—the whole of Venetian art, short of Veronese, was illustrated; if not with the absolute largeness and solidity of style of Giorgione and Titian, at least with an equal sentiment of color, of character, of beauty, of nature, kept and held in check by the devout, the serious mind of a grave man, long past the ambush of his passions, wedded to the tender solemnities of his religion

and resting in the dignities of honored citizenship.

A short distance from Pesaro, on the high ground south of it, is the Villa Imperiale, a noble cinque-cento construction, built by Leonora Gonzaga for her husband, and decorated by a famous majolica painter, Raffaele del Colle, and by Dosso Dossi. Here is some of the old furniture, the ducal chair of raised Venetian velvet yet intact, and beautiful ceilings, frescoes full of lovely color and light grace of invention. The great villa—half castle and half palace—is now a solitude. Its courts and corridors and rooms are uninhabited. Life and thought no longer dwell in its spacious halls. The oppressiveness of its vacancy, the sadness of its unenjoyed magnificence is very great. It was a relief to find a painter engaged in one of the rooms restoring some of the frescoes, and to learn that the place would be fitted anew for the future residence of the sons of Prince Albani of Milan, to whom it belongs; the same who sold the Villa Albani at Rome to Prince Torlonia. The Villa Imperiale has in part been suffered to become uninhabitable. But it is composed of two great

buildings, and the fairer structure is well adapted at present for a delightful residence. In it, it is difficult to understand the absenteeism of the great families of Italy, abandoning their villas and castles to live in cities.

As to this one, it is suggestive of a fine life and of interesting personages. Here Tasso and Castiglione and Bembo were entertained, and hither Petrarch refused to come; for as a fact, Pesaro is not a healthful place, and perhaps gave a bad name even to this high-placed lordly residence. The clearest complexions in Pesaro are found on its painted plates, and its majolica is more beautiful than its women. Many of its inhabitants are blind in one eye, sallow and inert. Its insalubrious air was so well known and so much dreaded that a certain Pope refused to stay over night in the town, but lodged on the nearer hill above Pesaro.

The Jewish type prevails, and Rossini is the most recent glory of the town, and here is Rossini's statue. And where do you suppose the Pesarese have placed it? On the piazza before the municipal palace? Far from it. They have placed Rossini's statue close to the little railway

station, outside the town, facing the railroad track, where he in fact turns his back upon his fellow citizens, and not without reason; for they have placed the bronze image of a man whose soul was born of all the harmonies of sound close to all the noisy jerks, clashes, hissing, puffing, blowing and screaming discords of a railway station, in forlorn isolation, where the unresting traveller who goes fast and sees little may catch a glimpse of him and take him for some railroad king.

O modern Italy! Does the spirit of the incongruous preside over your life as elsewhere, in this world surrendered to machinery and living by the most approved principles of utility and economy, yet defeating the purpose of beauty, outraging our sense of the fitness of things, and putting expense in the wrong place?





SAN GIMIGNANO.

SAN GIMIGNANO, approached by a long winding ascent, is well-placed between hills, without grass, whose tawny soil is only partly hidden by gray olives, set in straight rows, in rising and descending files ; by dwarf mulberry trees and grape-vines, a few scrub oaks, and here and there a thin, small, sharp cypress, cutting against the sky like a toy tree. You will be charmed with San Gimignano's translucent skies, and amused to see an array of mediæval towers, the like of which cannot be seen elsewhere in Italy. The people of San Gimignano bravely lived and bravely built. They left these long-enduring walls ; they had the wit to pay for the most expressive art and live in a certain joyous and splendid style. The town is but a few miles away from the rail-

road to Siena, on a Tuscan hill, and it shows its many towers against the sky in an atmosphere dry and light like the air of Egypt. Here, as at Siena, color remains unchanged. The frescoes are clean and fresh-looking as the mural paintings on the Nile. And it is a place not yet transformed by tourists. The hasty and plethoric traveller with "lots of money," has not yet made it a place of hotels, extortion, and greed. It barely boasts of an inn. It still shows twelve or fourteen square towers, and once boasted of fifty or sixty. Each family of importance built its own tower. Aside from their picturesqueness, the want of proportion between their size and number and utility and the size of the town itself seems grotesque ; but we are interested by its old gates, its old ironwork, its early art.

Here are the most delightful pictures by Benozzo Gozzoli. The frescoed walls of the Church of La Collegiata, which was meanly faced by a stucco front two centuries ago, within is most interesting. Its walls are decorated with paintings which illustrate the life of Christ. It is a representative pictured church, painted at a time of Christian art

when the religious theme was truly felt; and the pathos of expression of the faces in these old pictures is most searching. In the morning of Christian art in Italy there was little if any inflated, empty, glib oratorical utterance. The intense and sincere men were at the front. The shallow and facile had no place in that stormy time. There was awkwardness and stiffness in manner, but there was great directness and simplicity of purpose. They built for strength, for defence, and for glory. They painted to touch, to quicken, to hold the mind. And this little hill-town of San Gimignano, a bit of the middle ages, a kind of frame for its tense and quick life, has much to show us. We shall not build towers like the delightful masters of San Gimignano. But it will be well if, like their work, our walls endure six or seven centuries. The people who built San Gimignano, like the Etruscans, had a predilection for masonry, and lodged their vain-glory in piles of stone. A most delicate people, like them they had a mania for enduring walls; proof of something solid and selfish in character. In spite of Hawthorne's pathetic objection to old walls for

new generations, and his preference for our slight and hasty American way of building — each man making his own house, shifting every few years, if not every year, having a sort of instinctive feeling against the possibility of a barnacle-kind of being, of becoming a stationary, not a moving or progressing animal — the wall and building which is to last for centuries is the more respectable and admirable, even if it necessarily implies the encumbrance of old ways of life, and some obstruction to new things. It is more admirable because it rids us of the corrupting evil of cheapness and haste; of the evils of slightness and lack of noble regard for the work of our own hands. Either let us have tent-life, our roof folded and removed each morning to new fields, or let us seek the glory of enduring things. What can be more contemptible than the wooden houses of Constantinople? What more admirable than the marble palaces of Venice? As for the mediæval walls of San Gimignano, broken and defaced, their many towers discrowned, their proud escutcheons chiselled away, and most of their decoration gone, they still bear traces of art, of history, of religion, and

they are interesting and instructive. I counted fourteen lions sculptured on the arch of one old door-way, and I saw three old majolica plates inserted in some fourteenth century stone-work, and upon the walls of the town-hall a fragment of frieze of the same material. These, with the old gate-ways and the towers, were at least enough to look at for one day.

Something at least of what the spring-time of Italian art gave to the world may yet be seen at San Gimignano in the well-preserved works of Benozzo Gozzoli in the church at San Agostino. Benozzo Gozzoli was employed here both by the town and by the religious houses; and the records are still extant of how much he was paid for restoring the damaged parts of a great fresco by Cimabue, and for his own work in the town-hall. This very town-hall is one of the few places in Italy which associates the word "success" with the name of Dante. It is recorded with pride upon the wall that here Dante spoke in behalf of the Guelphic cause, and triumphed, winning the support of the masters of San Gimignano. And for this hall the old Florentine painter in

1466 agreed to paint the Virgin and the Angel of the Annunciation, "becomingly adorned, with good and beautiful colors," at the head of the stairs of the hall of the Grand Council. He also "agreed to clean and freshen all the figures in the great hall, and to cover the background with good blue, to do up in good gold the arms of the Commune, over the doors of the audience-room and of the new chancellery. All this to be done at his expense for color, oil, and lime, making of benches, scaffolding, and whatever else he needs; all to be completed by the end of next August, under penalty of double the sum inscribed." The price for this work is put down at ninety lire — less than twenty dollars — "half to be given at once to enable the painter to purchase the materials required for his wall painting, the other half to be paid on the completion of his work." Money was worth more in 1466 than now, or the old Florentine painter never could have bought his salt for the long time of his laborious life. What he did at the Campo Santo of Pisa Ruskin has told us, and we have seen it and his work at Florence; but perhaps his most

delightful works, and the best preserved, are the frescoes at San Gimignano, in the church of San Agostino, illustrating the life of St. Augustine, where we see old Tuscan men and women, and handsome, serious-faced young men, most gentle-looking maidens, and children, represented with sufficient power, with most attractive sentiment. They are wonderfully fresh in color, and bear double witness to the purity and dryness of the air of San Gimignano and of the perfect process of these old fresco painters.

In the church of La Collegiata we may be less interested in the earlier art which covers the walls, but we must look with growing and deepening interest, if we look at all, upon the pathetic illustrations of the life of Christ. These wall pictures have been repainted for the most part, and they belong to what may be called the dawn of painting in Italy. Whether the very remarkable compositions were appropriated from Giotto's or are original I cannot say. But anything more expressive, anything which exhibits more of the sentiment of a great dramatic action, or which better sets before us all the incidents that led to

the event of the crucifixion, I have yet to see. Better painting is often found, but never more of sincerity and feeling. The expression of these great subjects is so poignant that however unsatisfactory the mere painting and color may seem, and indeed is, it is soon forgotten in following the action and studying the character delineated in these old frescoes. It may be well said that Italy knows nothing of the Bible but the pictures in it or illustrative of it. But the Italian may claim that the Bible has been illustrated by the greatest minds of the greatest epochs of Italian life. He may say he has not been subjected to weekly discussions of theologians and preachers who so often, in zeal for a creed, have marred the sweet face of devotion; he has not had the divine or the human element of the Bible veiled by the mists of metaphysics or the fogs of theology; he has accepted its types and understood its meaning, as the illustration of pity, of suffering, of devotion; and by the help of Italian men of genius he has kept before him these great objects of reverence, of sympathy, of admiration, through centuries of intense life, in the greatest

forms of expression which man has yet found ; its significance has touched him in the great and lovely forms of Giotto's, of Francia's, of Raphael's, of Bellini's, of Titian's, of Tintoretto's, of Perugino's and of Michael Angelo's art.

The mind and heart of the Italian are touched through his eyes. Perhaps Englishmen and Americans are best reached through their ears. We keenly enjoy discussion, and controversy has charms for us, but it makes a vast difference in the sentiment of our life whether we concern ourselves with doctrinal discussions and apply critical analysis to sacred books, or whether we simply seek to place ourselves under the humanity which they represent. The Italian knows the Bible by a series of pictures of the dramas it holds. We know it quite as well as a great subject of controversy. Italy remains to-day, as she was five hundred years ago, sensitive and devout before the great drama of Christ's life, and looks at these old illustrations of her religious faith with adoration and love. All the pictured walls of Italian churches, where the pictures are the work of men properly endowed with noble sentiment and high

purpose, show us models of deportment, of dignity, of tenderness, of grace and modesty. Much seeing of all this noble art is like breeding it into the race and making hereditary what is most admirable in form and expression. Tuscan art has always been pure and sweet and precise. It is the character of the Tuscan landscape. It has been joyous and vivid and delicate and racy, and all this is in the character of the Tuscan. At San Gimignano, less affected by anything foreign even than Siena or Florence, this may be delightfully appreciated. The people of San Gimignano are gentle, refined in character and appearance. Doubtless both character and spirit were the result of the charming situation of their town, which is not more than ten miles from the birthplace of Boccaccio, seen from this point of vantage above the green valley of the Elsa. Boccaccio of Certaldo, and Folgore of San Gimignano, have expressed the light and gay spirit native to this part of Italy. How delightfully joyous, and mundane and sensual — carnal-minded but not corrupting or gross or heavy — for they have too much wit to sink under matter — they were, we know. And

as for the religious character developed here, it is known by types like Santa Catherina, of Siena, and Santa Fina, of San Gimignano ; "ensky'd," immortal spirits. These are the two ideals of this part of Italy. If we do not better understand them after seeing these Tuscan skies, breathing this air, seeing the pleasant loggias of these villas, the many Tuscan convents, with slim belfries above the olive orchards, it is something at least to have seen the kind of country in which they had their being.





FERRARA AT DAWN.

MY first impressions of Ferrara were all I could have desired—free from prosaic sights and the ordinary bustle of travel. From across the mountains in the night, past Bologna, and driving rapidly over the flat country which stretches between the Apennines and the Euganean hills, I approached Ferrara just before dawn. Afar off, the pallid light of the coming day seemed to wait palpitating over the remote horizon, over the stillness of a low and soundless country of rice-fields and meadows, and rushes, and a few trees. The breeze of morning after a hot Italian night awoke and came with the first streak of light in the sky. I could discover no sign of Ferrara from afar across what seemed an empty land. And when getting out at a little station still in the dark, I

was driven towards a town I could not see, the air sweetened by blossoming lindens, the whole situation of expectation and desire was intensified only to be the more gratified when I saw the massive walls of the square towers of the castle, behind which the tower was then easily hidden. It was, indeed, best to reach one of the princely minor places of Italy at such an hour; to see it in the mysterious light of early morning, its streets deserted, its houses shut, its entire life of to-day hushed, leaving to the stranger from a far country the unmolested impressions of its historic and romantic character. See great cities of stately aspect in the light of sunset; see London when all her ways are filled with the interesting life of her mighty being; but first see the low-lying town of romantic name, now shrunk, indeed, as I saw it — by dawn, or at moonlight — and for the moment the nineteenth century is forgotten, and you can realize the past, completely and sympathetically.

Ferrara is one of the most beautiful and romantic names of Italy, linked, as it is, with those of immortal poets and that name of tragic interest and baneful association, Lucretia Borgia. Here Tasso

sang, loved, and suffered in prison ; here Savonarola was born ; here Ariosto enjoyed life ; here Guarini wrote Pastor Fido ; here came Raphael and Titian ; here the beautiful Isabella of Este read the first precious copies of Greek authors printed by Aldus ; and here the house of Este united pride and beauty and learning in a brief day of splendor ; and here Lucretia Borgia charmed Cardinal Bembo, and, after the tragic horror of her Roman days and Cæsar Borgia's orgies in the Vatican, came to dwell, and dwelt, like a model of her sex.

Wake the porter by the castle wall. Moat and drawbridge are there still, and the porter sleeps. Wake the porter, for a bed is more than romance and rest more delightful than the vision of a long dead beauty, pale and dream like, and evoked but faintly, yet — to the mind's eye, Horatio — a presence in Ferrara's black castle walls, blind, soundless, prison-like and ominous, suggestive of dark drama and fatal luxury. The windows of my room opened opposite to the great moat of the castle. I gave one brief look and turned in, and woke to find Ferrara's principal street thronged ; I went forth to meet the new life of an old place.

A population characterized by dignity, and full of courtesy, small of stature, dark-complexioned, perhaps not healthy looking ; the region is, in fact, fever-stricken. The women and girls are delicate, graceful, slight. The Ferrarese is a type by itself, neither ugly like the Florentine nor beautiful like the Lombard, but feminine as the Venetian, without the fair Venetian skin ; but small-limbed, fine-featured, pensive : they are charming enough.

I went to Ferrara, not because of the sufficient interest of Tasso's name there, not for that of Ariosto, not even for Savonarola's, still less to see Lucretia Borgia's castle rooms. I went to look up the works of a painter, Scarsinello, who, born at Ferrara, painted immediately after the greater Venetians of the sixteenth century. I had seen three of his pictures at Rome, and they so greatly interested me that I wished to see more of his work. I found the portrait of the painter, representing a young man in buff doublet, lace collar and cuffs, his left shoulder covered by a cloak, a dagger in his belt, and a sword at his side ; a refined face, full of distrust ; a gallant of the past. I saw besides this well-painted portrait, several

large pictures by him of inferior merit, and one sketch vigorous in touch and rich in color. Ferrara had a group of painters of no mean pretensions, Dosso Dossi and Scarscinello all but equalling the greater Venetians in their sense of color.

Scarscinello had charmed me in the gallery of Prince Borghese by a picture (out of reach, never mentioned in later books of travel, and for the most part unobserved,) of Venus and Adonis, conceived as Shakespeare conceived the subject, painted as Veronese might have painted it—a picture full of the varied charm of hill and tree and stream, where autumn foliage is seen against the sky; where baying hounds pause in their swift running, barking in distress over Adonis, lying white and dead, his hunter's horn at his side, his quick feet stilled, while white-armed Venus, in flowing robe of rose, springs forward, followed by her maidens in wildest alarm. In the heat of Rome, away from pleasant uplands and breezy autumn skies, from the glare of Roman streets, I had often gone to take utmost pleasure in looking at this beautiful subject so beautifully treated, and not yet be-

come, like an opera tune, the fancied possession of everybody. Having found this picture, I went to Ferrara to discover something equal to it. Disappointed as I was in this, I had besides this personal interest, all that Ferrara meant — its old places of admirable brick-work and terra-cotta ornament, its frescoed churches, the interesting exterior of its Cathedral and the great castle, with its moat and drawbridge and painted ceilings of rooms where Lucretia Borgia once lived. All this was indeed enough. Beautiful architecture, like the arched and columned vestibule and cloister of the Hospital, — once Tasso's prison, — the walls of the Diamond Palace, great empty churches, wide streets, the statue of Savonarola, marble white; all this was most interesting, and more than one can convey by written or spoken word. Sufficient it must be to mention these things; mentioned, they may lodge in the memory images of great state or beauty, and so enrich the mind which is hospitable to these impressions of travel. It is indeed much to see how life shaped itself centuries ago; here with such splendor of wall, such play of fancy, such pride of wealth, such sugges-

tions, such sympathies, such associations, a glorious fabric; leaving for the modern life of Ferrara, buying and selling, as in any American town, their beautiful things. That great wrongs accompanied all this magnificence is true enough, but great wrongs may accompany the most sordid and barren existence of towns and cities yet unawakened by the love of beauty and the love of love, as Ferrara once was awakened, but now sleeps, and wakes wedded only to the utilities of life, because she lacks force for something more. Thinking these thoughts over the coolness of a water-ice in the shade opposite Ferrara's castle, while merchants and shop-keepers and farmers and gentlemen of leisure and light-footed, graceful little women went to and fro before me, or sat sipping ice, or drinking coffee, or smoking, I took my pleasure tranquilly. I had gone through the castle, which has little to describe beyond its great exterior walls, and which look best at twilight, as I saw them later, dusk, square, imposing against the sky. It satisfied me as a shape worthy of the past, and I went from Ferrara contented. I had seen the frame at least of all the figures of tragic and pathetic interest and

romantic charm which once filled it, and I saw "in my mind's eye, Horatio," Lucretia Borgia, as a Florentine has painted her, a fine, white, plump, blonde woman, with great prominent green-gray eyes, and marvellous hands — marvellous for whiteness and symmetry — just as she stands in her black velvet robe and lace collar, hair tightly drawn back from her forehead — as she stands, let me say, in the picture now in Prince Doria's gallery at Rome. There she is. Look at her. A still, docile woman, for the most part alluring, as only still, fair women are alluring. Repose and sweetness are in their presence, and oblivion in their love. Is not this the Lucretia Borgia of fact? Not the Lucretia of Victor Hugo's drama, nor of legend, but the Lucretia Borgia of Gregorovius, who has justly represented her as submitting to the wickedness of others, as passive to the rampant and common evil which not only environed her, but in which she drew her very breath of being; a beautiful, luxurious creature, without will, but receptive, and truly feminine, at least truly Italian, accepting, not making, her destiny.

But let us leave these types of our life — these

figures representing the possibilities of our nature and of our experience. Adieu, Tasso ! forlorn type of great gifts ineffective against the proud man's contumely, the pangs of despised love. Adieu, awful Savonarola ! burning with wrath against wickedness and dilating with prophecy of woe. Adieu, Ariosto ! gay and libertine lover of life, flourishing where Tasso suffered. Adieu, Duke of Ferrara ! cold, silent, unscrupulous. Adieu, loveliest ladies, Isabella and Leonora d'Este ! Adieu, Cardinal Bembo !—all splendid or pathetic figures of intense life, of the Italian Renaissance.

Gone are they ! The play is ended ! But here is the stage, here even some of the properties of that old magnificence of Ferrara, where life was celebrated in exquisite and licentious pastorals, and love was travestied in fable.

To me, Ferrara will always be a town of old poetry and romance, splendid, spacious, secret—for I reached it in the stillness of earliest dawn, companioned by thoughts of its absent life. It was this to me much more than a flat inland town, which I traversed in the light of common day.



SERRAVALLE

SHERE the foot-hills of the Venetian Alps sink into the wide plain of Conegliano, at one of the rocky gate-ways through which hordes of warriors and great armies of later days have poured down into Italy, the quaint old town of Serravalle, with its broken walls of defence and few remaining towers, clinging to peaceful slopes, or overlooking its sudden rocky defile, has always seemed to me one of the most interesting and picturesque places of North Italy, barely mentioned in guide-books, not celebrated or sought by tourists, yet where wall and tower and palace and tomb show something of the great days of Italy when her whole life, richly fed, found expression in ways forever interesting and beautiful to men.

Leaving the radiant city of the lagoons on the

shimmering waters, and once more touching mother earth, the scent of the soil and of growing and ripening things, so delightful after the salt air of wave-washed Venice; passing the distant and princely castle of Colalto above the Trevisian plain, I made brief halt at Conegliano and drove on to Serravalle. Conegliano is the birthplace of one of the greater of the early Venetian painters, who is to the more renowned masters what Wordsworth is to Byron — a lover of nature, a pious, a religious soul, at peace with himself, not a lord of life with splendid utterance, raging with rebellion or lusting for the opulent beauty of superb things, but full of sad sincerity, taking pleasure in ascetic forms, touched by tenderness of love for modest and quiet ways of life. Cima de Conegliano alone is a name sufficient to lend interest to Conegliano. But I wished to get away from the cities of the plain as from the cities of the sea. Stopping at a little inn, bearing the sign of the Giraffe, and — with that touch of humor which circumstances so often create by contrast — I was received by a dumpy-lung-like woman with the shortest neck possible. I could not resist a little amusement at her expense,

seeing the long-necked beast painted above the door, and the short-necked creature smiling in hospitality under it — and here let me say whoever travels this way and wishes to stop at a prosperous inn and get good Italian cooking, should stop at the Giraffe, where cook and *padrona*, both images of corpulent beauty, fattened to the utmost limit of locomotion, show in living shape the unctious conditions of their existence.

But delightful Serravalle is not sufficiently expressed by well-being at its comfortable inn, where one is served by a soft-skinned girl with brownest eyes and pleasantest smile. A rapid, rushing stream pours through it between high rocks, that allow room only for it and the road, both coming from grand mountains ; and close to this stream, swift like the waters of Pharpar and Abana, rises a lone old church-tower, which overlooks the one-arched bridge.

Walking under Serravalle's low arcades, which have sheltered men from the sun and rain for the last three hundred years ; walking across its dear little piazza and under its old gateways ; peering through the wrought-iron gratings of old gardens,

where stone vase, and pedestal and statue are covered with lichen, and stately steps lead up to box-bordered terraces ; or looking at walls yet bearing the crumbling escutcheons of great families ; or seeing faded frescoes on palace front, the plaster fallen, leaving leprous spots of peeled wall, every step interested me. Walking one way, I came close to the rocks of the foot-hills of the Alps, just beyond the gate, and in the opposite direction, low water-fed meadows, dense and luxuriant, where vines trailing on mulberry trees, and orchards of apples and figs, with grassy spaces between, or teeming with corn and wheat. I had never seen cultivated earth more abounding in good things. Whether one reaches it from the higher Alps, or comes from Venice, it makes the same impression of prosperous, plentiful, and peaceful life.

A great city, like Venice, at one time mistress of the sea, could not be so close at hand without having enriched the nearer cities of the plain ; and rich Venetians, nobles and churchmen, acquired at Serravalle, as at Treviso, palaces and gardens and orchards, in which to breathe delightful life when spring came, or autumn poured her gold or lured

the sportsman over brown fields and up to the sharp hills ; in either case affording to the rich Venetians means for a perfect life. Not far from Serravalle Titian came for his recreation, and stayed when unwilling to make the more arduous journey to his birthplace in the mountains of Cadore. Serravalle holds the double charm of urbane life and pastoral quiet — slopes of smoothest pasture, wet meadows of richest green, where tinkling bells of cattle and bleating sheep are heard, and where balconies of carved stone, such as are admired at Venice or Verona, and gardens not unworthy of either place, may yet serve for the fête-like life of prosperous and cultivated people. As in Venice, many of the old palaces are abandoned to the poor, or are used as store-houses. Silk spinners occupy some, and silk-spinning is in fact the chief industry of the place.

I was led to seek entrance into one of the greater palaces ; its outer walls being admirably painted under the very eaves, a painted frieze of decorative flowers in gay colors, yet bright, expressive of the highest taste and cultivation, charmed me.

Once within its great empty walls, and going

to the upper floor, now heaped with cocoons of silk-worms, the only vestige of former splendor remaining were the great painted beams which supported the ceiling; between each space of the parallel rafters I saw coarsely but effectively-painted classical subjects; Pagan mythology, illustrated with that naturalistic charm characteristic of the Renaissance, and vital with the pleasure which belongs to reality rendered in beautiful forms.

I saw enough to judge of the taste and style of a first-class residence in a country town, as it was three hundred years ago. The marvellous thing is that scraped, peeled, and robbed as Italy has been, she is even yet rich, not only in her greater cities, but in the minor places of her admirable life, once so splendidly endowed with all shapes of an accomplished, an opulent civilization; and this is because she has felt the need of arraying herself with all that can ornament life, and gave herself to the production of the beautiful, without which industry leaves no more praiseworthy sign than the industry of ants or beavers.

I turned from Serravalle with regret, seeing its bishop's palace on one of the nearer hills coming

dark against the evening sky ; and with the image of its spacious walls in my mind I started the next morning for the heart of the Dolomite world to see the rock pinnacles of the Ampezzo valley.





FORTUNY'S ART — WHAT DOES IT MEAN ?



FORTUNY'S pictures compelled the famous Meissonier to say, when he saw Fortuny's work : " If I was not Meissonier, I should like to be Fortuny." They made Henri Regnault, of whom France is so proud, at once say, " Fortuny is the master of us all." The ardent and ambitious young French painter was said to have had more than one sleepless night, thinking of the force and brilliancy of Fortuny's painting. His name has become a great fixed-star of glory for Spain. His fame was well won, it was quickly won. His sudden death filled with grief his many and fervent followers, who, in Rome at least, adored every touch of his brush, and sought, with the usual success of imitators, to paint like him. A score of Italian and Spanish painters

illustrate his method, and keep strictly to his subjects. These painters have trained themselves to repeat the mere dexterities of his execution, and they seek for sensational arrangements of color, and costly stuffs and metals to make the dazzling effects which are so surprising in the work of the great Spanish painter, and they may be said to have turned away from the ideas and sentiments which are essential to noble art. Fortuny created the demand for a certain kind of amusing art, and his followers now supply the market. Picture-dealers and rich Americans, both alike indifferent to, or ignorant of, the delights of noble art, please themselves with pictures of the Spanish school.

Fortuny died at the age of thirty-three; carried off by fever at the finest time of his life, when he was successful, when he had hosts of admirers, friends and followers. He was rich in the fullest possession of his powers. He was young, handsome, a glory to his country, the pride of Rome; and all but revived in the eternal city the splendid honors to the artist which Raphael won in the height of his glory. He dreamed of beginning a new epoch in his art-life. He said he had painted

for others, *now* he should paint for himself. He had that dream of greater excellence, of a larger purpose, of a purer devotion to art, which should carry him beyond everything he had as yet achieved. To him, with his great ambition, in his splendid studio, rich with precious things from far-off times — to him, with his enormous covetousness of beauty, of luxury, — to him, taking an artist's delight in heaps of rare things — stuffs, metals, porcelains, arms, furniture — to him with his unappeased passion for sensation, Death came, that old, old Death who lets fever loose on the very strength and flower of life in tragic Rome. It struck Fortuny, the latest glory of art in the eternal city, as it struck the great Raphael in the very brightest hour of his fame. But both Raphael and Fortuny, it seems to me, had reached the full and final expression of their genius ; and though both died young, both had attained the maturity of their powers, and probably would have given us neither anything new, nor anything more perfect than they had given to the world. It was the large ambition of the true artist for Fortuny to dream of a more personal expression, but he had

in fact shown in the most brilliant way his sense of life and character, and nothing really remained for him but enjoyment of his great renown while he repeated himself. It has been said that Fortuny died for the good of art. His influence was working badly for the interests of noble art, for in his hands painting became amusing, like a clever story, and not an inspiration. For Fortuny, without imagination, without an ideal, had nothing in common with the great names of art; nothing of what exalts and ennobles the soul; nothing of glorious dream or tender reverie; nothing of deep significance, such as we find in the works of Raphael, of Michael Angelo, of Tintoret, of Delacroix. He had not even that refreshing love of nature, that sentiment of things which not only poetry, but landscape art gives to us. Nothing of all this? What then does his brilliant and extraordinary expression give us? Two things above all — character and sensation. Seeing life as a spectacle, and passionate to know and illustrate its most effective moments, he is an artist, and only an artist, as distinguished from all other men. The gleam, sheen, lustre and dazzle of metals and stuffs, the satin-

fine, flower-soft textures of things, the rose-bloom, spring-fresh deliciousness of voluptuous flesh,—these were the objects of his inspiration, of his covetous spirit. And to express his sense of all this he was marvellously endowed ; and to lift his passion for all this above mere feminine delight in ribbons and rags, he had a sanguinary taste for blood, for violence, for brutality, for action rather than sentiment. Hence he painted a revolting thing — the shambles — for the sake of the ruddy blood and opalescent colors of — unmentionable shreds and pieces of the smoking carcass of a freshly-killed ox. Hence he, like Regnault, delighted in the oriental tyrant and executioner, finding in the cruel, torpid, fate-like Turk a splendid type of tragic horror, enormously interesting, affording color and character for his purpose as an artist. He brought to the jaded senses of the modern man a new thing. Instead of the old sanctities of life, in lovely forms of virgin, child, or saint, he represented the old terrors of sudden death, and the splendid sensualities of the East !

With these he seduced, with these he amazed us. From the tame tranquillity of drawing-rooms

and the empty cackle of society, we looked upon these things as our fathers read Byron's poetry; the pirate and barbarian and hero in us stirred under the smothering comforts of our civilization, and we saw and felt anew the lawlessness and despotism, and fierce adventure which have their day of being for so many men. Fortuny, like Byron, gratified our passion for adventure and our greed for sensual excitement. He inspired in his imitators a morbid love for the two great themes of French and Spanish art — Voluptuousness and Blood. How Regnault illustrated the last, his *Executioner*, from the Luxembourg gallery, and now in the Universal Exhibition, shows us in a surprising form. Having a masculine grasp of character and a feminine delight in luxury, in the shapes and shows of life, Fortuny with his wonderful hand, his fine artistic sense, became at once the first and most famous of modern painters. No modern painter ever made such an impression on his contemporaries. He was talked of, as Byron was talked of, — as a man of original genius, of brilliant expression, of unprecedented audacity in his art.

To Fortuny, life was a spectacle and a sensation, without religion or love or hope. A splendid thing, tragic with possible ruin and loss, intoxicating with the bliss of possession, and his art means nothing more and nothing less.

It is because he has illustrated this with greater brilliancy of execution than either Meissonier or Gerome bring to render a similar sense of life ; it is because he has illustrated his passion for splendor and luxury and voluptuousness, and his ignorance and insensibility of what is called the spiritual life ; it is because with happiest touch, with a fine, flashing, full expression of his theme, he painted the most seductive and amusing things, that he was at once accepted and honored as a new and great artist. And artist he was, gratifying with his forms and colors the most modern sentiment which rules the lives of men in great and corrupt capitals, and sends them to far-off lands, to alien civilizations, for the strange and barbaric, to associate it with the voluptuous and costly allurements of great cities.

Fortuny interests us, he astonishes us, by his illustration of three things — character, luxury,

and blood. He puts a man before you ; he paints a superb interior ; he has his tragic incident. The fire and force with which all this is exhibited, the gayety and lightness with which he handles all this, makes Meissonier seem dry and studied, and Gerome tame and pedantic.

I said Fortuny has no imagination. He has great invention, a most fecund fancy ; but that imperial thing, imagination, he has it not. He could not have remained a mere painter of character and stuffs had he been endowed with imagination ; he would have reached at once to the height of the great and universally dramatic artists of the world, and taken rank with Tintoret and Delacroix. He remains below them simply because of his want of imagination. His inventions, or rather his subjects from Oriental life, his well-arranged little comedies, amuse us, interest us, fascinate some of us ; but they have nothing in them to gratify or quicken the higher life of the senses, and show nothing of that noble sympathy and tenderness, that wide humanity and profound sentiment which hold us mute before the greatest master-pieces of art, before the painted dramas of

Tintoret, the monumental sadness and gloom of Michael Angelo's statues, or the penetrating charm of Leonardo de Vinci's faces. And different from these great humanists in purpose and sentiment, he also fails of reaching the finest result as a colorist; he sacrifices harmony to dazzle, and tone to effect. But what he sought for he reached, and as an artist is the supplest, most brilliant in execution of any of the world's great modern painters, all but the peer of his greater countryman, the immortal Velasquez. The sale of his pictures and sketches, and objects of art left in his studio, brought to his widow one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. His love of landscape was poor, as it is in most Italians and Spaniards. He could not fully appreciate Corot, who seemed to him incomplete, and he was indifferent to, perhaps he had an aversion for, Turner's works. He called them *omelettes!* His judgment of Corot was poor, common, unintelligent. Corot painted the very light and breath of morning — of the very dawn — and expressed all the light, tender leafiness, and coolness, and whispering joy of a tree. Fortuny painted leaves as though they were made of metal

or silk; bright, green, definite in hue and shape, *not* taking their modest place in the wide harmony of color and form of the landscape. The criticism which fumbles about the common-places of Corot's lack of finish or completeness, is blind to general impressions, and not responsive to the sentiment of nature, which the greater artists, like Titian, like Claude, like Corot, best see and render. Fortuny's one great mistake was in going from particular to particular, and often insisting on a detail where a greater mind would have merely suggested it, while filling you with the sentiment of great things.





OUT OF ROME



FLIGHT across the Roman Campagna, breathing in its freshened spaciousness at night, and with the expectation of seeing the rising moon above the Alban hills, is something to enjoy. A brief excursion, three hours' drive from Rome to Nemi, gives one more than is within the reach of the inhabitant of any other city, and it is worth while to say what one sees and what one may enjoy. Toward sunset, going out of the church of Saint John Lateran, our horse, as if scenting the fresher life of the hills, goes at a good pace over the Appian Way. We have come through no squalid suburb, but by vineyards and villas shut in by high walls, and soon we are looking at the undulating space of the Campagna. And here are the grand arches of the ruined

Claudian Aqueduct, in long perspective, in processional majesty, reaching to the hills. It is the Campagna landscape, known to the world, once really seen, never less than impressive and beautiful. We may be bored by feeble or too often repeated copies, not by the actual Italian landscape. And he is most fortunate who knows what it is under all the varied expression of the seasons, and has seen many Italian days and nights many years.

The Campagna is now blond and coppery in color. The vast spaces once covered with waving grass and grain are but scorched stubble. The harvesters have done their work. Here and there cut wheat is laid in great circles to be beaten out by the hoofs of horses. This primitive mode of threshing, very beautiful and inspiriting to look at, is still kept up by the slow cultivators of these great tracts of land. It is already sunset. A light breeze blows over the vast spaces of the Campagna. The suffocating heat of Rome is now a discomfort of the past, and as at sea, under a summer sky, freshness and space revive the sense of pleasure in life. The hills in front of us are violet-tinted,

dreamlike, and fall in caressing lines of tenderest grace to the level of the Campagna. Far to the north the couchant shape of lone Soracte, isolated from the cortège of mountains which makes the confines of this amphitheatre of history, is seen in the tender light of a Roman summer evening. We are between the mountains and the sea, and not more than an hour from Rome, in perfect solitude, in perfect silence, save the sound we make over the hard pavement of the road. We have gone past a few halting-places, where only wine and common food may be had; we have passed the old Via Latina, with a few tombs yet standing, but in ruin, and we are now in the midst of the wide waste and beauty and silence of the Roman Campagna, which surrounds Rome like a sea, fixed in everlasting rest. The fires of summer have scorched everything, and at this hour it is pale and gray. Close by us we see the whitened and withered stalks of asphodel. Wild marigold yet holds out against the drought, and lives in the sun; and a few poppies, fluttering like flames, vivid and intense. We reach the first rise of the ground to Albano. The spectral moon rises above Monte Cavo. And now twilight

and moonlight—it is not day, it is not night—the rose and silver light of the rising moon, and golden spaces of color in the remote western sky, make something like enchantment, giving a color and expression to nature full of mystery and charm. The dark cypresses below Castle Gondolfo smite densely, with startling incisiveness, above the old monumental wall to our left. We have about us all the magic of a Roman landscape. The air is light and fresh—a moon-wind fans fitfully the quiet hour after sunset—and the whole tinting of nature, only to be described by the word ineffable, is full of delicate graduations of color and of voluptuous softness; an opalescent, tepid, suffused evening, suffused with tender light. Great space, untroubled solitude, silence, great mountains, graceful hills, great ruins, a sovereign city domed, walled, towered, where religion, law, and art speak to the world—all this close at hand. What city in the world could offer this measure of great things, this kind of pleasure, this beauty—a spectacle and a memory, within two hours' drive of its gates! And yet how few Romans enjoy this privilege at this hour, dreading fever and disliking

solitude. The immense melancholy of the Roman landscape is naturally the result of its emptiness, the absence of human life. It is left to the herdsman and the shepherd, and by day to the peasant who toils in it, but seeks rest and safety at night in the hill villages; formerly driven to them for safety from aggression, now going to them because of hereditary habit, dislike of solitude and fear of malaria. But it is oftenest insufficient nourishment which makes the peasant the victim to poisoned air. Properly fed, he would be able to resist bad air, and could sleep on the Campagna, now a solitude—a waste place of silence and melancholy.

A grand poet has finely imagined the ghost of Rome in the solemn stillness and emptiness of nature about the antique city; and something ghostly, phantom-like, great, formless, vague, seems to be a presence by day and by night on the Campagna, oppressing the mind and filling it with melancholy disquiet. It is a homeless space of mighty memories. Fever and death here watch and slay through centuries of life. Naturally the Latin, with his warm and passion-

ate instincts, stays in cities and towns, and when he goes in the country goes only to another populous place, where he can converse with his fellows. He is never at home with nature pure and simple. And even his poetry has no trace of intimate love or converse with it apart from human interests, as is the case with much that charms us in English poetry. The Italian treats nature as a spectacle, its pomp of scenery for his life, secondary to human interest, tributary to it, never isolated from it. His passionate and splendid existence will not be appeased with glimpses of the moon, or in poring over a babbling brook, nor will he sit in churchyards listening to the curfew's bell. He requires companionship and lively intercourse wherever he goes. Hence his life in piazzas and cafés, hence his great castles formerly, and now his villas, for the most civilized life in the country; hence he avoids nature, which has no trace of art; hence he never seeks solitude,—nature and solitude as sought and sounded by people of the north. Only one Italian has known much about both. Defeat and exile forced Dante's feet through the loveliest places of Italy, and following his foot-

steps the passionate pilgrim may see how well he saw, how deeply felt, away from men and cities. The Latin's aversion to solitude was so great we know that he has peopled the woods and mountains with delightful beings. And pagan mythology is still vital enough to give something to English poets and make them celebrate in various verse much that is now to most of us phantom-like or unreal. The Italian poet bravely clung to pagan worships, and long kept up the fiction of fair presences in nature, but he is most vital when he celebrates a real person in nature; and if he goes "where the leaf is fresh and still," "where spring the wood flowers in the shade apart," it is, as the old quattro cento Ballata says, not alone, but with "a shepherd maid" "more fair than any star to see." The foreigner alone seeks Italian nature as sufficient in itself.

This occurred to me with not a little insistence, for I was on my way to the Lake of Nemi, with a French abbé, and we were off on a kind of sentimental journey. The abbé wished nothing less than a picture of the lake by moonlight, because there he had passed a delightful month in years

gone by, and he must have a picture of a place consecrated by a precious friendship, and beautiful in itself. French in his expressive enthusiasm, and antique in his sentiment of friendship, I enjoyed his companionship and went with him to Nemi.

We reached Albano, passed through la Riccia and Gensano. The streets of these hill towns and villages were filled with people; everybody was out of doors, and the more squalid conditions of life, distressing to a northerner, were not seen as in the glare of day.

We drew rein at Gensano to learn about the way to Nemi, which we feared was somewhat rough for a carriage; and rough and stiff our good horse found it. But within an hour we were at Nemi, having gone around the half-circle of the lake,—an old crater-mouth,—under luxuriant tasselled foliage of chestnut, and beech, and the darker leaved ilex; and on each side of the road we saw ivy of Bacchus, and jessamine, and clematis and honeysuckle vines, which here trail in tangled lavishness, lighted by the moon. The night-owl cried from depths of darkness across

the lake, and then the solemn stillness of night seemed deepened. Could it be a fact that great Rome was but three hours away? We were now in the very bosky places of old mythology.

Soon we were on the loggia of the little inn, with the great walls of Castle Orsini above us; below, at a great depth, the windless water of the lake; beyond, facing us, between the lake and the Campagna, the dark houses of Gensano, seen against the white mist covering the Campagna and hiding the sea; and over this a troop of little fleecy clouds, like lambs, quietly resting in the still moonlight, which touched with lustrous and metallic brilliancy the steel-colored water of the lake. Peace of a summer moonlight, the thick wooded hills about us, a primitive life in most respects still unchanged, and but three hours from the capital of Italy,—all this was most delightful.

My companion, the abbé, declared our purpose, ordered a good supper, and said: "Here I spent my 'honeymoon' with my friend. You shall have the very room we occupied. You shall see what we saw. Paint this place of poetry and beauty,

that lake, this moon, the old tower and castle. I must have it, and the portrait of my friend. His photograph you shall have when we go back to Rome. Here we lived together, rode, walked, studied, played. I must have two pictures — one of Nemi by daylight, the other by moonlight. Make your studies, get your impressions, my dear artist. There is but one Lake Nemi, a man is young but once, and the consecrated hours of our life should be perpetuated in some way."

I have met several original persons, known something unusual in experience, but never met anything more unexpected and entertaining than this novel enthusiasm and devotion of my delightful abbé, who took such a dramatic way to enlist what art I could give to perpetuate a precious impression. It gave me Nemi by moonlight; and here I too thought with tender regret of a dead friend, true gentleman and poet-artist, Gifford. The first picture I ever saw by Gifford — and I believe it was the first he exhibited after his return from Italy — was a sunset view of this very renowned Lake Nemi. How many years ago he was here, in the very flush of his early manhood, and here drew

a rich inspiration of beauty, saw the enchanted stillness of Italian nature, the lake like a great goblet, the well-designed hills, the inundation of light, where Campagna, sea and sky seem to melt and faint into one vast harmony of color. What we saw was worth the double enthusiasm of the priest and the painter.

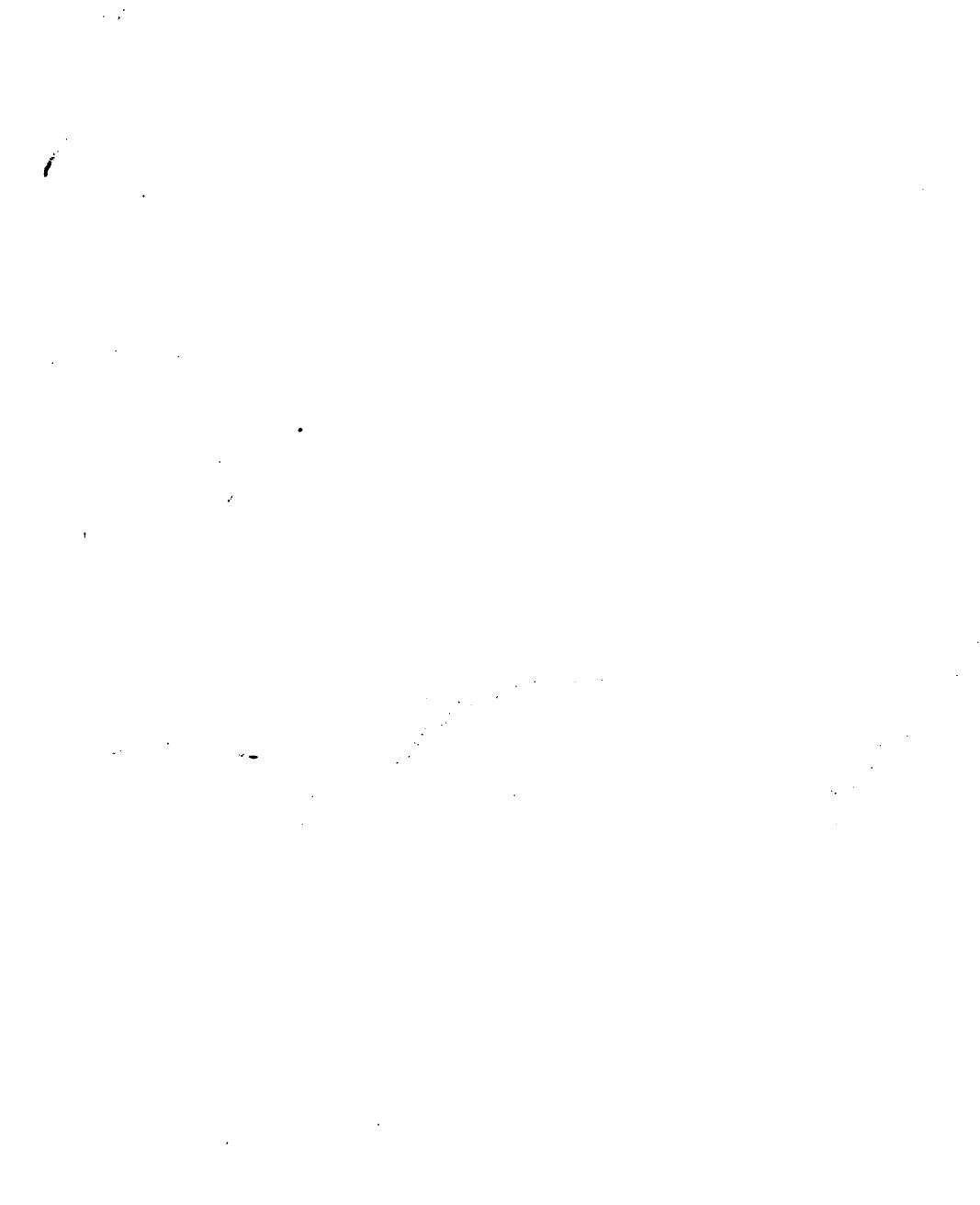
At sundown we started for Rome by the way of Albano and Marino, to see Albano's lake, the Barberini pines and the famous avenue of ilex trees; then the wood of San Marino, and Marino itself, once a stronghold of the Colonnas. And all this we saw under the splendor of the Italian sunset, or under the brilliancy of the moon. Marino, with its towers and walls, its waste of princely buildings, and the crowded roughness of its poorer houses, looked most theatrical and unreal, and as if centuries away from Rome. And yet already a tramway leads from Rome to its very gates. From its heights we went down at a good pace, past olive slopes, dusky and silvery in the moonlight, leaving the densely thronged piazza and narrow street, the public fountain crowded with women and girls drawing water. We passed by

great farm-houses and vineyards, castellated farms enclosed by great walls, pierced by great gates with armorial bearings, and all silent as tombs, to the last lone, closed farm-house, on the very edge of the Campagna, looking both deserted and haunted; and it was haunted by fever, and deserted at night for the safer heights of Marino.

We soon struck the old Frascati road and were speeding over the first levels of the Campagna, which here seemed absolutely flat and infinite under the wide obliteration of night. The immense sky, with flying cloudlets whitened by the moon, or dark with change of drifting mass of denser cloud, was solemn. And now we reach the black arches of the Roman aqueduct, and get a new impression of them—seeing two bending lines of arches, which here converge and lead away to Rome. See them at night from this side of the Campagna, and resist if you can the awe and might of their broken grandeur. See them at night, and all the customary phrases of reverence and wonder and admiration are inadequate to express the gloomy pomp, the fateful aspect of this giant masonry set in the monumental solitude of the

Roman landscape. Roman antiquity has nothing more impressive, and here its bones are not likely to be picked clean by archaeologists, arranged for the profit of museums, nor set in order by municipal command. Here nature and time have their way with art, making it one with them, potent as nowhere else, to summon all that the human mind can get from or give to a great spectacle of ruin.





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